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COMMERCIAL, PITTSBURGH.

THE CASTLE-BUILDER.

BY [illegible] W. LONGFELLOW.

A gentle boy, with soft and [illegible] hair,
A dreamy boy, with brown and tender eyes,
A castle-builder, with his wooden blocks,
And towers that touch imaginary skies.

A fearless rider on his father's knee,
An eager listener unto stories told
At the round Table of the nursery,
Of heroes and adventurers manifold.

There will be other towers for them to build;
There will be other steeds for them to ride;
There will be other knights, and all filled
With greater marvels and more glorified.

Build on, and make thy castles high and fair,
Rising o'd reaching upward to the skies;
Listen to voices in the upper air,
Nor lose thy simple faith in mysteries.

CHRISTMAS.

"Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit walks abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike;
No fairy takes, no witch hath power to charm,
So hallowed and so gracious is the time."

SHAKESPEARE.

Of all holiday seasons of the year none has identified with it so many agreeable associations, tender memories, noble emotions and holy aspirations, as that which we celebrate as the natal anniversary of the Saviour of the world. Custom has in most countries subordinated the religious to what may be termed the jovial spirit in the manner and form of its celebration; still, its connection with the great event that brought redemption and the hope of salvation through faith to the lost and sinful race of man is seldom forgotten. The early portion of the day is usually devoted to pious exercises in the churches of most Christian denominations, and it is seldom until afternoon—until, indeed, the Christmas dinner smokes upon the board—that the more material and secular characteristics of the occasion commence. From the moment, however, that grace has been said and the ruthless carving knife has commenced on turkey and sirloin the fetid process of dissection, mirth and hilarity are proclaimed. Thenceforth the day is one long glowing festival. The combination is one of the highest order of enjoyment, dashed with just the faintest shade of pleasing sadness.

Christmas, it is true, has not been regarded in this country with so much of religious and joyous ceremonial as in Germany and England. We have shared part of the honors that are its annual due with Thanksgiving day and New Year's, taking our regard for the former from Puritan progenitors, and following the example of the Hollander settlers of New Amsterdam in respect to the latter. Yet we still give to it more than an ordinary share of affectionate remembrance, and we fondly linger over the accounts of the glorious spirit it evoked in custom and outrage, in hut and in hall, far back among those mythical times, when England, for instance, was supposed to be "merrie;" when peer and peasant and squire and clown for once almost cast aside social distinctions and rooted it together in some country measure, or pledged a mutual wassail over a foaming bowl of flip. Of course a considerable portion of these delightful reminiscences of the past is purely imaginary, and it may be justly doubted if the poor, at least, were any better off for the few hours of condescending geniality on the part of the rich which made them so much the impression and inequality of the rest of the year the more conspicuous. But we like to read about such things, and fancy matters generally were ever so much better then than in this degenerate age of whirling, grinding, screaming machinery, when iron has entered into men's souls and their eyes are blinded and their ears are stopped with the cotton of the great mills. We love to read about—trying to persuade ourselves it was all real—of those jolly days, and almost wish our lot had been measuring them, instead of us reading about the matter-of-fact work-a-day period of our own. We shut our senses to the dark side of the picture.

There was and is, however, a Christmas kind of jollity in England—which has not indeed become entirely extinct among a certain class in the Southern States—that it might be well to imitate more universally. WASHINGTON IRVING charmingly describes a pleasant social episode of the kind in which he shared a genuine revival of the times when, from far and near, the guests assembled at the old family mansion, down in the country, among the ancestral oaks; when the Christmas board groaned under its load of roast beef, plum pudding, venison, pastry and the embellishments of a substantial dinner; when the guests all had good appetites, for in the good old times there was no melancholy from dyspepsia; when every face wore a smile, and every heart was brim full of gladness; when the very atmosphere seemed to exhilarate with a mysterious influence, making morose men affable, dull men witty, and sad ones happy. And then, after dinner, what a night of merriment! The long hall is cleared; the fiddles get to work; the limbs of the aged even become lithe as they lead the dance, to the intense delight and boisterous merriment of the young; the young are full of happiness; the mistletoe bough hangs from the ceiling, and, as the reluctant maiden is whirled in the dance under its benignant boughs, the loud kiss announces the fact, while she with coy blushes, affects to feel offended at the magic silence; then pleasure never flags until all are surprised to hear that it is morning, and that even Christmas has its end. The succeeding slumber is a dream of a long series of happy Christmases. When the guests disperse, a melancholy pleasure fills each heart, and the great store house, memory, has added to it a treasure that will while away many a heavy hour with pleasant recollections.

Unitarian and hardened by business anxieties as American human nature, under the influence of an unceasing round of work and and enterprise has become, there is a corner left in many a heart whence a yearning after relaxation such as this cannot be driven. We find ourselves absorbed in Irving's eloquent pages, or revelling in the description of the famous Christmas at Dingley Dell, where good Mr. Pickwick was so distinguished a participant, and in fancy we find ourselves exclaiming:

Heap on more wood! the wind is chill:
But let it whistle as it will!
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deemed the new born year
The fittest time for festal cheer,
And wild our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had rolled,
And brought all its hospitable train.
With all its [illegible] hospitable train.

And what though the Christmas of the olden time has gone from us, to be no more known forever. The solemn ceremonies and rollicking festivities of our ancestors are replaced by customs and observances in which there is no lack of good cheer still remaining. The Yule-log no longer blazes on the cheerful hearth. The boar's head no longer figures on the well filled board. The wassail bowl, steaming with the beverage of ale, nutmeg, sugar, toast and roasted apples, has been trained for the last time, and finds its place now only among the musty relics of the past. The Master of the Revels and the Lord of Misrule have forever ceased their gibes, their gambols, their songs, their flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table in a roar. The rafters no longer ring with roistering choruses; the voice of the harper is heard no more, and all the gallant troubadours have vanished from the earth. The motley mummers no longer make merry among their friends and neighbors, and the children no longer go from door to door, singing their Christmas carols; dining halls are no longer green with holly and ivy; and few are the pair maidens that are kissed in this country under the mistletoe bough. And yet Christmas still comes welcome as of old—the day above all others consecrated to the high hopes and noble affections and sweet charities of life. The preacher is still heard from the pulpit, and with more attentive ear, for the fire and clearer are the "good tidings of great joy" he now proclaims to the sons of men. The Christmas table is yet loaded with substantial cheer that maketh the heart glad; and plum pudding, goose, turkey, minced pies, and roast beef, have more than made good all the boars' heads in Merrie England ever fed and fattened with. Santa Claus at useless his annual rounds, and stockings are fuller, and Christmas trees brighter, and merry voices merrier, and rosy cheeks redder than ever before. The games and the sports are not all done yet, and so he fancied he heard a low, wailing cry. At first he thought it might be the sighing of the wind, but as he listened it came again and again, and at length he went from the house to see what could be the cause. The moonlight fell on the snow-covered ground, making every object distinct. Near his gate he saw a little child bending over a dark figure on the ground, and calling plaintively, "Mamma! mamma!" As he approached she scarcely heeded him, and never ceased her mournful cry, still plucking at the dress of the unconscious woman. What should he do? His first thought was to procure assistance and take her to the Alms House. But when he looked at her again, and saw how ill she evidently was, not even he could have the heart for that. No other house was very near. There was no help for it; and he lifted her, and bearing her into the house, consigned her to Huldah's care. Huldah was kind hearted enough, and ready to do all that her simple skill could suggest for the stranger's relief, but it seemed of no avail, and the village physician, who had been summoned, shook his head gravely as he looked at her.

Some of the neighbors, too, who had heard the rumor, had come in, and there was a hurrying to and fro of busy feet. Luke had resumed his seat by the fire, half moved at all the stir in his usually quiet house, and yet roused to some interest in the stranger's fate. The child had been left there with him, for in all the excitement no one had thought of her. She sat crouching in the corner, hushed with awe and alarm, bewildered by the multitudinar scene about her, and half afraid of the silent man who never looked at her. But at length, with a child's keenness, she gradually stole nearer and nearer to him, and timidly laid her hand on his. The light touch roused him, and he looked up to see the little creature's face turned wistfully into his face, the tears still shining in the bright eyes.

It was the first time, perhaps, in all his life, that a child had approached him trustingly and confidingly, and it touched him. Involuntarily he raised her to his knee, and with scarcely enough of gentle touch, he passed his rough hand over the bright curls, which twined about his fingers as he stroked them, and tried to soothe him his harsh tones in low, sweothing words. It was not long before the little arms were clasped about his neck, and the soft, unwonted touch sent a strange thrill to his heart that seemed to stir it with gentler feelings. Soon the child was smiling gaily, and merrily prattling in broken words, while the wondering eyes were fixed on his, and the little fingers stroked his rough cheek. But drowsiness at length crept over her, and the dark eyes closed, and the golden ringlets rested on his shoulder. Luke was a rough looking man, and yet it was a lovely picture as he sat there bending over the child, and his grizzled locks almost touched her fair hair. One of the neighbors looked in to enter the room, and was amazed to see him thus; but when she would have taken the child away, he refused to give her up. Motioning them silently to go, and he liked well enough to have her there.

In truth, it was a pleasant thing to him to have some one entering and clinging to him; he sat there, and felt the soft, yielding child, and her warm breath fanned his cheek, emotions softer than he had known for years took possession of him. Memories of his own childhood, of his own and scenes forgot en years ago. How long it was since he had thought of his boyhood, and yet it rose up before him to-night and gave strangely to his heart. He saw the pretty cottage which had been the home of his childhood—the tender mother, whose voice was so soft and low, always even in reproof, and the gentle sister who she sang old melodies in the dim twilight—the father who had seemed to him so noble, so worthy of adoration—the fear of him, the wish to please him, the shared his sports, without whom no pleasure had been complete! But she had passed out of his life, and for years he had scarcely thought of her; yet now, as memory led him back into the past, he recalled a thousand childish joys which they had shared together. Then came the time when rose before him, and none looked fairer than the bright Christmas days, when the parents loving thoughtfulness had filled their hearts with gladness, and when they had borne to others poorer than themselves tokens of care and kindness. How sweet those hours looked to him now!

But a day fatal to them all had fallen gloomily on the house; when strangers entered it and moved silently about, and spoke in whispers, and he and his sister, awed by the mystery around them, had crept away together to wonder what it meant. They knew the father and mother were in the hushed and darkened room, where they were forbidden to enter, and they often stole to the door to try to catch the sound of the familiar voices. And at length they had been taken there, into that quiet room, and had received wistly, and carried back in alarm as they saw the still and motionless forms before them and looked on the faces of which they had wore the old loving smile. And the days had seemed even more dark and dreary than ever, and every one about them had worn a haggard look, and for a long time had come when they had stood together in the old churchyard by an open grave, while the strong arms of them had goaded heavily up and down, and as the coffins were lowered into the earth, the mystery of all those dreary days grew clear to them, and they had ceased each other's sobbing. And pitying friends had surrounded them, and kind words had been whispered, and gentle hands led them away. They had never dared to look down again, but that night had cried themselves to sleep and unfamiliar scenes. And in a few days he and his sister had been parted, never to meet again, thrown among strangers.

It was strange how to-night the old scenes, so long forgotten, came back to him once more. Year after year had passed by on, contented after his own way, finding a sort of dull pleasure in his routine of toil, in resting to his stores; troubled by no thoughts of the past, by no longings for the future. But now, as he sat there holding the sleeping child, a breath from the bygone years came stealing over him, and the barriers that time and sorrow had been in the days long fled, when every trifle—lothes he had come to out to the store—and Ethel him with [illegible] And he bowed, a tear fell on the fair locks of the little sleeper—the first tear that Luke Norris had shed for years. He brushed it away, half angry with himself that he could be so weak.

The door was softly opened, and old Huldah entered, bringing with her some herbs which she had gone home to get, among the sick woman's things. It was a miniature, and might be needed, perhaps, to discover who she was, if she should not recover consciousness. Luke looked on it indifferently enough, for in the turn his thoughts had taken, he had almost ceased to remember the invalid, but when he looked at it, the old woman was startled to see the change that came over his face, it grew so white, and his whole frame shook. She had seen the picture before, but to him his sister had appeared one more. From the mists of the past the lovely features shone out, and the face was not quite the same—it was more mature, more thoughtful, and perhaps even fairer than he remembered it; and yet, as he gazed on it, he could not doubt; his heart refused to question it; he knew that it was she. And who could this woman be who had his sister's picture? What was the link that connected them? She must be had been half indifferent to her fate, whether she lived or died; but now he was filled with an intense desire to learn all concerning her. He questioned Huldah closely about his sister's story, so near to him, and yet so far removed—the dilings he was hurning to hear, almost within his grasp, and yet, perhaps, to be lost to him forever! It could not, must not be! And the sleeping child was almost forgotten, as this new emotion filled his heart. He gave no heed to Huldah's words of caution, who hastened to the sick room. And as he looked upon the pale face lying there he would have foretold the coming of a wraith for a word from those pallid lips. But the lips were mute, and he was powerless.

He was in an agony of suspense. Hour after hour he paced the floor, now pausing at the closed door for some sound that should tell of returning life; now turning to watch the slumbers of the rosy child. The night had passed away, and the early gathering about his heart was broken up, and the emotions and feelings so long repressed now burst forth in a restlessness, as his sister lingered between life and death. While the slow moments passed, and he still watched and waited, the years flew back, unfolding to his view the scenes through which he had passed, and no glad memory rose to brighten the long, cheerless way. What had his life been?—a loveless, joyless thing! In all his little world, no heart to warm to him, as he neared it again, but that night had cried themselves to sleep and unfamiliar scenes. And in a few days he must see his sister had been parted, never to meet again, thrown among strangers.

It was strange how to-night the old home, so long forgotten, came back to him once more. Year after year had passed by on, contented after his own way, finding a sort of dull pleasure in his routine of toil, in resting to his stores; troubled by no thoughts of the past, by no longings for the future. But now, as he sat there holding the sleeping child, a breath from the bygone years came stealing over him, and the barriers that time and sorrow had been in the days long fled, when every trifle—lothes he had come to out to the store—and Ethel him with [illegible] And he bowed, a tear fell on the fair locks of the little sleeper—the first tear that Luke Norris had shed for years. He brushed it away, half angry with himself that he could be so weak.

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1866.

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THE RELATIONS OF THE STATE AND CHURCH.

In the Pastoral Letter of the Roman Catholic Council, lately held in Baltimore, there is much excellent advice given to the members of that church, because much of it, we suppose, the great body of Protestants would entirely agree. As a secular journal, we do not take cognizance of the theological doctrines set forth. As to the recommendation of good morals, we are glad to see it emanating from any church or any quarter. The deliverance of the council, on the relations of the church to the State, falls fairly within our scope, as this is a politic l question, and it is a matter of more than mere curiosity, to know what is the accredited opinion upon it, in a body that embraces so large a number of our fellow citizens.

On the general principles of civil government, enunciated by the council, probably all classes of people, in the main, agree. Christians of all denominations believe that civil government is of God, and that should it enjoin anything contrary to the law of God, it transcends its limits. But in the application made of these principles, the council diverges rapidly from the common sentiment. It says:

"This undeniable principle does not, however, entail the same consequences in the Catholic system as in that of Protestants. In these the individual is the ultimate judge of what the law of God does or does not command, and is consequently liable to claim the sanction of the higher law, for what, after all, may be, and often is, but the suggestion of an undisciplined mind, or an overheated imagination. Nor can the Civil Government be expected to recognize an authority which has not the character of a Teacher as Divine, and no limits in its application, without exposing the State to disorder and anarchy."

Whether the authority by which an individual judges of "what the law of God commands or forbids" be a divine authority or a human one, is a theological question, that we do not discuss. But the civil government does, in fact, hold the *individual* responsible, whatever his authority or his judgment for his violation of civil laws. And this is what we understand the Council to dissent from. It attributes the responsibility to "the church," and claims that the civil government is bound to recognize this authority as superior, instead of holding individuals responsible for their conduct. The Catholic has a guide in the Church as a divine institution, which enables him to discriminate between what the law of God forbids or allows; and this authority the State is bound to recognize as supreme in its sphere—of moral, no less than dogmatic teaching.

This is very peculiar ground to be taken by a religious body. First, it takes the individual Catholic out of the position of direct responsibility to the civil government, for civil offenses, and secondly, claims that the civil government is bound to recognize the church as supreme, and to acquiesce, accordingly, in the transaction. This bold claim of supremacy is followed by a sort of apologetic and evasive statement, needed as well by the logic as by the politics of the above extract. This is a part of it: "There may, indeed, be instances in which individual Catholics will make a mistaken application of principle, or in which, while the principle of obedience to civil authority is recognized as of divine obligation, the seat of that authority may be a matter of doubt, by reason of the clashing opinions that prevail in regard to this important fact."

The whole affair has relation to *individuals*—why then should the individual Catholic be introduced as the exceptional case? And by this last sentence it is conceded that the individual Catholic, after all, is as liable to err in the application of the principle of obedience to civil authority as an individual of "the sects." Nay, worse, he is admitted to be in danger of mistake as to "the seat of that authority," for the Protestant knows it to be in the civil government and not in the church. We have no "clashing opinions" on this point. The church by itself, and the State by itself, is the fixed political creed on this point. And if we inspect the records of civil and criminal courts, or the jails and penitentiaries of the country, it will be found that the individual Catholic, even with the church as a guide, has not been more obedient to civil government than one who felt his responsibility directly to it, without the intervention of the church.

Leaving the abstract question of the relation of civil government and the church, the council next takes the subject up in the concrete, and specifies one vital point in which the laws of the States in this Union do not meet its approbation, not squaring with those of the church. It is the property question. The council says: "We have still to lament that in many of the States we are not, as yet, permitted legally to make those arrangements for the security of Church property, which are in accordance with the canons and discipline of the Catholic Church."

The complaint is not that in respect to the holding of property the Catholic Church is made to differ from other churches, but that it is *the same* with others. It is expressly added as a ground of complaint, that in this matter, they have to conform to *general* laws providing for this object," and that is a system which is "borrowed from those who have rejected her authority." It is objectionable because it is the same system that is applied to other religious denominations. This is the best reason, we should suppose, for approving of it, because it is even handed and just to all, without extending special advantages without reason, to any. But the council says they cannot submit to this, because it is "alien to her principles" on the point of holding property, and contrary to her practice. So they say, "we content ourselves with the formal protest we hereby enter against it."

And here we leave the subject, only remarking, in conclusion, that whatever theological or ecclesiastical notions of the relations between the State and the different churches, it is quite certain that the nature of our Government does not admit a recognition of ecclesiastical authority as supreme, over that of the State, in any matter of which the State has jurisdiction, and it is equally certain, that in the tenure of property, purely a State matter, no one church or denomination of people can justly claim, or can be allowed, if they do claim it, special and exclusive privileges or exemptions.

CAN'T READ AND WRITE.

As the subject of schools and education is engaging considerable attention, and is destined to engage more, as it should, we give below some statistics from the census, which may tend to show its importance. These will give direct and strong support to the Republican doctrine, that the stability of our free institutions and government depends on the intelligence and moral energy of its citizens. They will also show two facts, both of which have an important relation to the above doctrine; first, that by far the largest number and largest proportion of persons, white, native-born citizens of the United States above twenty-one years of age, who cannot read or write are found in the States lately in rebellion against our Government, and embracing within them the institution of slavery; and second, that in the Northern States the greatest number of those of like age, who cannot read and write, are not native, but foreign born. Both facts show that our institutions are more favorable than those of foreign countries to popular education, as well as that popular education is favorable to our institutions. We shall give a few examples which illustrate these positions, using round numbers:

Alabama has 57,000 whites above twenty years, all natives but 700; Arkansas, 23,000, all natives but 80; Georgia, 43,000, all natives but 700; Kentucky, 67,000, all natives but 4,000; Mississippi, 15,000, all natives but 500; North Carolina, 68,000, all natives but 100; Tennessee, 70,000, all natives except 3,000; Virginia, 74,000, all but 3,000 natives.

In this enumeration only white persons are included. In the States named thus far, the number of foreign born people is so small as scarcely to be appreciable. We now give the statistics of the same sort as the above, of some of those States. Of persons above twenty years of age, [illegible] cannot read and write, Connecticut has 900 native to [illegible] foreign; Massachusetts, 2,000 native and 44,000 foreign; New York 26,000 native and 95,000 foreign; Vermont 900 native and 6,000 foreign.

The statistics of some of the Western States present results which appear to conflict with the position we have taken, for no States have been more true to the Government, although there are large numbers of native born citizens who cannot read and write. This, however, was not the consequence of indifference to education. It is one of the privations incident to the new settlement of a country, that schools cannot be established in sufficient number. These very States [illegible] in the West, where there are the largest number over twenty who are unable to read and write, have now the most flourishing schools, and the largest proportionate numbers in them: Illinois 400,000 attending school; Indiana over 300,000, (in 1855 it was 200,000, not reckoning the pupils in 2,000 private schools); Ohio, 600,000.

It is proper to remark that these statistics are those of 1860, as contained in the census report recently issued.

THE MISSION TO MEXICO.

Encountering unexpected difficulties in carrying forward the object of his attendance on Minister CAMPBELL to Mexico, General SHERMAN has parted from Mr. CAMPBELL and returned to the United States. The mission looks, at present, very much like a failure. We do not know to what extent we ought to feel disappointed by this result, inasmuch as we are not well informed as to what was the nature and design of the mission. Left in a good degree to conjectures on this point, we reserve our regrets at the failure of the purpose, till we learn what the purpose was. In this state of incertitude about the design of the mission, we can readily imagine that its failure, under the circumstances, may turn to advantage rather than detriment.

We can conceive of no condition in which a country can be placed, more delicate and difficult for the diplomacy of other nations, than the condition of Mexico at the present time. And the difficulty is more formidable for us than for other nations, owing to our proximity, to our well known views and doctrines concerning European interference with American Republics, and especially to the popular prejudices in Mexico against the United States growing out of our recent collision with that country.

While our relations and policy required but the passive recognition of the Republic, in the form and under the treaties existing when the attempt was made, under foreign auspices, to inaugurate the Empire, the case was plain and simple. Nothing was necessary and nothing could be reasonably demanded, but that our recognition of the government over Mexico should remain, undisturbed, as it had previously been. We were under no obligations to change our diplomatic relations with the Republic, while it was bravely and hopefully struggling against subversion by a usurping power. The received doctrines concerning governments *de facto* and governments *de facto* required nothing of the sort at the hands of the United States. But, while this is incontrovertibly true, the complications existing in Mexican politics may render it very dubious whether any other than than this passive policy is expedient. Certainly the delicacy and difficulty of the case cannot fail to be encountered when an active policy is attempted, as it must in its nature, be deemed aggressive on the party supporting the empire, and on any party in rivalship with JUAREZ for the Republic.

This, we apprehend, is the very obstacle that our active policy toward Mexico has met with at its outset. However well intended, and however well and right, in itself, it may be, it excites jealousy and alarm in Mexico, for the reasons above alluded to and for others that might be stated. And from present appearances, any moral aid it may furnish to the only Government we recognize officially in Mexico, will be more than counterbalanced by the excitement of passions and the unifying of factions in opposition to it. This result has, apparently, already to a visible, if not also a formidable extent developed, if it is not, in fact, this that has occasioned the failure of the CAMPBELL and SHERMAN mission. Any interposition short of force is in vain in the affairs of such a country as Mexico, so torn by factions, so politically demoralized, so every way debased. Moral support, though well meant and justly directed, especially coming from the United States, is not available to the party for which it is designed, and makes all the rest more active and more united in the support of wrong.

We have no call, so far as it yet appears for forcible interference, and having failed in our effort at active diplomacy for the good of that unhappy country, our wise course is, to fall back upon the former passive policy and wait for further developments. This, if it shall do that country no good, it will do it no harm, and it may save us from inconvenient and embarrassing complications.

A FEW WORDS IN SEASON.

There are reasons—strong ones we think—for believing that a change of times in business matters is not far off. The indications are too plain to be mistaken. It is contrary to all history and experience, that the business condition that accompanies war should continue in a state of peace. The inevitable change has, in our case, been delayed by causes that are known, and that must ere long cease to operate. The unusual demand for labor and manufactured goods is slacking off by supply. Prices of commodities have declined, wages of labor will decline by the same law.

We, therefore, along with this word of friendly warning, earnestly counsel all persons receiving wages to take the best possible care of what they earn, to avoid unnecessary expenses, and, if need be, to take less pay rather than not have a place of regular employment. Should the extensive works of this manufacturing region be constrained to stop, as they must if they cannot be continued without serious loss, the men will be best off who have laid up something from former earnings, for the support of themselves and families. A better time it would be, of course, if the business of manufacturers should not be interrupted, but as things are, that, is with declining prices of the products of labor, while the wages of labor are kept up, the burden falling wholly on the proprietors of the works, is heavier than they are disposed or able to bear.

Hard times may be safely considered as impending. They might, in some degree, be warded off by a general willingness to accommodate business and prices to the peace standard. If any large class stand out against the unavoidable tendency, they may hasten the crisis, but cannot escape its consequences when they come. Labor and capital will both feel the change. By just and reasonable accommodations they may make it much less severe. At any rate, we advise all to be industrious, to live frugally, to prepare for hard times. Thus, if not able to ward them off, they will be in the better condition to weather them through.

A QUESTION OF VERACITY.

Major General STEEDMAN, of Ohio, is one of those facile tactical men who somehow manage, under a great variety of circumstances, to keep at the top of public affairs, where the cream is and the skimming of it most easily accomplished. He has been a professed Democrat for many years, yet he was shrewd enough to take a prominent part in the operations of the war. Of course, under the present administration—fealty to which he was quick to see was the only means of gaining public place and emolument—he has been an ardent Johnsonian. His reward has been the gratification of an inordinate vanity, by associating his name with the successful conduct of the War Department, and the more substantial recognition of his plastic usefulness by an appointment as special commissioner to report on the working of the Freedmen's Bureau. This report he might just as well have made without leaving Washington; but, for appearance sake, he traveled through the South on a tour of make-believe impartial investigation. As might have been expected, he condemned the institution without reserve. Now, very few people who know the Major, men would be likely to hesitate as to whose word was most reliable—that of General STEEDMAN or General HOWARD; and General HOWARD emphatically says that the part of the report which "charges to the account of the Bureau all the evils of the labor system, while it attributes to the State governments and citizens, in great part, the good accomplished," is "unfair and false." The mere statement, coming from whom it does, will be sufficient to establish public opinion on the subject.

TIME TO STOCK TROUT PONDS.

We have so often addressed the readers of the COMMERCIAL on the subject of trout raising, that we should have to rate our words and arguments very low, to suppose that none of them had been induced to give the subject a thought. In many cases, no doubt, the first thought was such as to forbid any more—contemplating the difficulties as too great and many to warrant the undertaking. The best offset to these apprehension is the fact, that it has been successfully accomplished in more cases than one, and when successful is always profitable. It has been found profitable on a large scale, and highly convenient and pleasant even where it extended only to the supply of the delicious and beautiful fish for the table.

We have had the pleasure of seeing the trout preserve, or rather, we may call it the trout nursery of Mr. SETH GREEN, in Caledonia, New York. A description of it was given a couple of months ago in the COMMERCIAL, and we need not repeat the details now. It is a perfect success. Nothing can be more beautiful than to see within a space not larger than a common school house, some eight thousand of these most beautiful of fish in water as clear as the air.

There are plenty of springs within from ten to sixty miles of Pittsburgh that would furnish water enough for the homes of hundreds of thousands of trout. After the shaded banks of the ponds and streams become covered with moss, the resort of water insects, the trout will not require food or care from the owner, unless the waters should be greatly overstocked. The months of January, February and March are the proper time for transporting the small fish for the stocking of new ponds. These can be obtained of Mr. GREEN, whose address is Mumford, N. Y., together with the necessary instructions about their treatment. The introduction of trout raising, in this country abounding in springs, would be a great public benefit, as an example, which would be followed by many.

IN his recent speech in the House in favor of a reduction of members' salaries, Mr. SPALDING, of Ohio, insisted that the true mode of compensation, was by a per diem wages, as the practice was for the first thirty six years of the government, except for the Fourteenth Congress. A salary, he thought, had a tendency rather to induce a neglect of business, while per diem secured it.

Girdle Round the Earth.

In energy and enterprise, the men who are stretching the telegraph wires over the plains and prairies, are scarcely surpassed by the patient and hopeful band who laid the Atlantic Cable. A line has been completed four hundred miles, connecting Salt Lake and Virginia City, Montana Territory. Two years since but little was known of the region where now that great necessity of population and civilization—the telegraph—is completed and in working order. Over desert, plain and mountain range, where, a few years past, the foot of the white man had scarcely pressed, and where the wild Indian reigned supreme, the plodding builder toils, step by step, sets pole after pole, and finally stretches the wire which crowns his work with success. Another Company is pushing a line into Nevada, and [illegible] of Denver City, passing up from the plains and grasping the Rocky, Wasatch and other mountains. Away up in the North, the Russian Telegraph Line is growing in length, pushing through pathless wastes and deserts, through vast regions, where the voice of man was never heard before, to bring the civilized ends of the earth together. These indomitable pioneers of civilization will build the Russian Line and connect San Francisco with Asia and Europe by the way of Bering's Straits, and thus complete the "girdle round the earth."

The Negroes' Id a of Universal Suffrage.

As a general thing, where the freedmen have expressed themselves on the suffrage question, it has been in opposition to immediate universal suffrage. The better class of them realize that the mass of the late slave population lack the requisite intelligence, consequently this intelligence qualification is generally regarded with favor by negroes best able to judge. A letter writer says: "I spoke on the subject to two or three intelligent, thrifty and thriving negroes, who would have the right to vote were the qualification intelligence or property, and they are entirely opposed to universal negrosuffrage, on the ground that 'You know, master, all de niggers wh's fit to vote, and that to give them such a right would turn their heads and unfit them to earn their bread.'"

Gasoline.

This substance, so called from its extreme volatility, is being combined in burning fluid, and is exceedingly dangerous. It is produced in the distillation of petroleum, and has until recently been a waste product. Now, however, wherever it can readily be procured, it is used as a means of making money at the expense of human life. It is one of the lightest and most volatile liquids known, its specific gravity being that of alcohol, and the least volatile that an ounce or more left uncovered in a wine glass will be found to have entirely disappeared in a few hours. It is highly inflammable, burning on the surface of water. It is as inflammable and almost as unextinguishable as gunpowder.

Napoleon to Mr. Seward.

It appears that the French Emperor sent a very short and decisive telegram to Count Montholon immediately after the receipt of Mr. Seward's $5,000 dispatch, protesting against the evident attempt of Mr. Seward to force more hasty action in withdrawing his troops. It was merely in these words: "Tell the United States unless upon forcing matters in the withdrawal of our troops, France can but consult her honor in this connection." There is the best authority for the statement that the project of engaging in a foreign war, as a means of saving the Administration, was discussed at length in the Cabinet meeting about the time Mr. Seward sent his long dispatch.

The Currency Question.

Notwithstanding, the uncertainty now existing as to what is to be the financial policy, so far as the present Congress can establish one—there is a growing feeling that the wishes of the business classes will be heeded. And their first great wish, undoubtedly is, that no material change shall soon be made in the volume of the movements of the currency—that there shall be no theoretical manipulation of the currency attempted by the present Congress. As this feeling is allowed to strengthen, the business of the country will grow steady, healthy, the recent feeling of depression pass away, and enterprise renew its efforts.

Collapse of Crinoline.

The New York *Times* makes the following statement: "No one who promenades Broadway now-a-days will doubt that the long-foretold, but decidedly 'eclipse of crinoline' has at last come to pass. It is visible to the most careless observer, and has proof in our most fashionable ladies as they 'march along.' The immense circumference of skirt and sweep of train that were in vogue a few months ago, and have been expanding and lengthening ever since, until recently, are now things of the past, in their stead ample skirts are now gored to fit neat trim dresses, at once moderate in size, gracefully brief, and pre eminently *piquant*."

The New Trial for the Assassins.

Speaking of the probability of civil trials being granted to the conspirators, the correspondent of the Boston *Advertiser* says: "While the Republicans are greatly disappointed at the turn of affairs in the Supreme Court, they are certain that, upon the suffrage question, it has been in opposition to immediate universal suffrage. The better class of them realize that the mass of the late slave population lack the requisite intelligence, consequently this intelligence qualification is generally regarded with favor by negroes best able to judge. A letter writer says: "I spoke on the subject to two or three intelligent, thrifty and thriving negroes, who would have the right to vote were the qualification intelligence or property, and they are entirely opposed to universal negrosuffrage, on the ground that 'You know, master, all de niggers wh's fit to vote, and that to give them such a right would turn their heads and unfit them to earn their bread.'"

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Mr. Stevens's New Bill.

The *Nation* declares that Mr. Stevens's bill, which proposes a new convention in North Carolina, to be chosen by all males who can read and write and own one hundred dollars worth of property, exclusive of rebels, although he would have looked "horribly radical" a year ago, is really, supposing the Amendment to fail, the most sensible and conservative plan yet submitted to the public, and one which at present bids fair to be adopted in the end for all the States.

ALL the water used by the inhabitants of Massaya,—a town of 2,000—in Nicaragua, is brought from a lake in the mountains some two miles distant. It has been the custom for the past three hundred years to convey the water to the town in five gallon earthern jars, which are carried on the heads of women, about six hundred being thus required daily. Recently is forming in New York to supply the town and erect water works.

THE *Round Table* has been sued by Mr. Read—author of Griffith Gaunt—who thinks he has been damaged to the extent of $5,000. The paper in question, though entertaining a good opinion of its power, probably never dreamed that it was doing any man that much damage, —certainly no one else thought so.

LOOKING at the present condition of steam navigation, says Captain McKay, the shipbuilder, it seems that many of the enterprises now before the world must end in failure, for the simple reason that there is not enough trade to meet the enormous expense of keeping large steamers running. The world is twenty years ahead of common sense in steamer.

PERSONAL.

—The death of Griffin Taylor—one of Cincinnati's oldest citizens—is announced. He was born in Virginia, in 1812. When a mere boy he removed to Cincinnati and entered the employ of his step father, David Kilgour, in the grocery business. Six years afterward, he became a partner in the house, which then assumed the firm name of Kilgour & Taylor. Six years later, John Kilgour, a son of David, was taken into the firm, and three years afterward, Mr. Reuben R. Springer, a son-in-law of the senior of the house, became a partner. The firm name was then changed to Kilgour, Taylor & Co., and so remained for a number of years. No house in the country ever commanded wider reputation for integrity and fair dealing, from the time of its organization through its various changes until its expiration by the death of its successive and last representatives, two years ago under the firm name of Springer and Whiteman. In the year 1858 or 1859 Mr. Taylor left active commercial business, retiring with a handsome fortune, but rather feeble health. He was a man of strong will, benevolent impulses, strict integrity, and ardent loyalty.

—St. Louis is hardly a literary hub, yet since "that Judge who has misused Shakspeare" has turned out a St. Louisian, he has certainly been picking up. A new weekly literary paper is to be started on the first of the new year, to be styled "*The Hesperian*." The early numbers of the *Orcutter* are also out, a weekly sheet devoted to boys and girls, and full of fun chronicles of the times. Mr. James Clemens, editor of the *Guardian*, has published a translation of the "History of the Society of Jesus," and somebody in the *Evening News* office has blossomed forth in a volume of poems. Judge Holmes's novel is finished, and the publication will soon be here, save a sharp criticism from the St. Louis *Times*. The work is by some considered simply as the vehicle by which the Judge wishes to convey his peculiar religious notions—rather inflict than otherwise—doubting the immortality of the soul, and giving nature divine attributes.

—Mr. Savigny, the late Prussian Minister at the Diet of Frankfort, and one of the official peace commissioners of Prague, is spoken of as President of the Council and Committee to be organized under the new German Constitution. But as other rumor asserts that he will be appointed Secretary of Foreign Affairs, in the place of Bismarck, who will retain only the office of Minister President. Savigny, it is generally understood, is in the intentions of Bismarck's policy, would do credit to his renowned teacher. The next months will be big with the most interesting developments.

—Rev. T. B. Bucher, pastor of the German Reformed Church of Dayton, has been elected editor of the *Western Missionary*, the weekly organ of the denomination in the West, and the late editor, Rev. Dr. Hollifield, has been elected to the presidency of the College. The *Missionary* is printed and issued from Dayton.

—Mr. Fred. Hudson, well known as owner managing editor of the New York *Herald*, is living at Concord, Mass.

—Isaiah Rynder, for many years a political bully and leader of the New York sham Democracy, is about to turn author and publish the recollections of his infamous life. He will commence at 1810, when he was a boy on board a North River sloop. In 1825, we find him captain and owner of a canal boat from Utica to Richmond prison is the theme, within has been well written up by Mrs. S. Ashmore, in *No. 15 of his "Heroic Deeds of Heroic Men."*

—Intellectual distinction and eminence seldom pass into the second, and rarely into the third generation. The Adamses constitute a brilliant exception. Within a year we have just now another in the Frelinghuysens, of New Jersey. The one now in the United States Senate was graduated at the head of his class and father. In business, the Astors are equally distinguished.

—The ex-Elector of Hesse, with his morganatic wife, the Princess of Hanau, is at Paris. He is in continuous negotiations with Baron Rothschild, who has been with him several days. The confidential clerk of the banking house, who was intrusted with the stocks, bonds and specie of his Highness, has been decorated by him with the cross of his William's Order. So much of his ex sovereignty is left to him.

—The Toronto *Globe*, apropos of Robert Shelter to Lynch, confiding with him that he was not likely to be hung and was convicted into a good Fenian card, suggests to the President that he can be made a martyr of himself, if he likes, and that he may be put to death in retaliation for the purposes both of the Government and of the Brotherhood than such a man as Lynch.

—Dr. Wm. A. Hammond, ex-Surgeon General of the army, has been appointed Professor of Physiology in the Medical College of Maryland. The title of it is "Robert Severne, his friends and his enemies," and it will not only be a psychological study, but will be a novel. Dr. Wolfe's but a story pure and simple. Dr. Hammond is already known as the author of several professional works.

—The French newspapers, before his arrival, are attempting to make of General Dix a lion. One paper boldly says: "The man who is evidently the favorite of the Administration is General Dix." We are sure the General—without knowing him—does not desire to play any such role.

—Lamirande, who robbed the Bank of Poitiers in France, and escaped to New York, has been tried at Poitiers, and condemned to ten years of dungeon—a more infamous condemnation than that of the Confederate Davis, even in its surrounding incidents averted. Here is one of them. He said that he had a large sum of money when he was in New York, but that it was taken from him by persons who were engaged to defend him took it, and were to have had a fee for their services, and that they kept the balance back. "I did they do it?" said the Judge. "No, they only got me back to France." "Why, you fool," said the Judge, "they would do with the balance?" "They kept it, probably." "And they were lawyers?" "Yes," he replied. "Ah," added the Judge, "they were New York lawyers!"

—Marquis De La Valette, the new French Minister of Foreign Affairs, belongs to an old French family, and is a nephew of one of the Empress Josephine. He has been ambassador at Rome and Constantinople, and recently has been at Berlin, where he escaped all the storms of Bismarck's policy. He married the widow of Samuel Wales, the well known American banker, and adopted her son, who is now a young man. His father was a rising diplomat and leading Deputy in the Constituent Assembly of 1848, and one of the heroes of Waterloo, famous in this vicinity many years ago for their beauty, and one of whom was the mother of Mr. Henry H. Durand, of Boston.

—The French Empress some time since secured a patent for a combination of sewing machines from Mr. Goodwin, the head of a great manufacturing house at Paris. The Minister of the Interior, to carry out his wishes in the matter, has granted the request of the Prefects, requesting them to forward each the names of six suitable persons from whom the Empress will select recipients of the valuable instruments. The distributions will be only to private families, and the conditions life will make the gift a useful one.

—A New York letter writer says that some comment has been excited in that city from the fact that Mr. Wilkes Booth's family entertainment at his residence to Secretary Stanton last week. It is suggested that the motive of the levee was the liberation of Mr. Booth, to found a magnificent asylum for the orphans of soldiers and sailors.

Mineral Fair of the Invisible.

From the Scientific American.

If two bodies were placed in space without any force acting upon each other than their own gravity, they would immediately start to move toward each other. The sun and planets which constitute the stellar system to which our solar system belongs are prevented from running together into one mass by their revolutions about each other. The revolutions of the planets about the sun, and of the satellites about their primaries, have been ascertained with that wonderful precision which is the just pride of astronomical science, and astronomers are just now engaged in the sublime problem of unraveling the revolutions of the countless suns that make up our stellar system. Already the cluster of the Pleiades is indicated as the proximate locality of the centre around which our sun, with all its system, is sweeping his vast orbit, and it is suggested that it is probably the common centre of the orbits of all the suns of our stellar system.

If the force of gravity extends across the intervening spaces between the separate stellar systems of the universe, those systems must rush together unless they are held apart by centrifugal forces, and if the power of light were an emanation as held by Newton, the space in the remote regions of the universe might be absolutely empty; and, in that case, the revolutions of the bodies around each other might be due to gravity. On the other hand, if light is a vibration in a subtle fluid, the fluid might obstruct the motions of bodies moving in it, and they would finally come together in one mass. The experiment so ingeniously devised by Arago, and carried out with his usual honorable regard for the fame of its designer by Messrs. Foucault, Fizeau and Breguet, to measure the velocity of light, has a difference in the velocity of light in its passage through air and water, has demonstrated that light is a vibration. It follows from this that, as far as light extends, space is filled with a material fluid, which resists the motion of bodies moving in it, and the bodies within this space must gradually wind their way inward, and ultimately come together in one mass.

The moon must be drawing very slowly nearer and nearer the earth, and the two bodies, in the far distant future, will come together. The solid crust of the earth will be broken up by the shock, an immense quantity of the moon's motion, and the two bodies will fuse together into one. The fire of the fusion, and enlarged earth is cooled upon its surface, a second series of geological strata will be constituted, accompanied, perhaps, by strange and inconceivable forms of animal and vegetable life.

At the same time, the earth is winding its way inward toward the sun, and must ultimately fall, an inconsiderable pebble, into the sun's glowing mass. And not the earth only, but the other planets, and our solar system must one day be but as unsightly cinder. When this globe is cooled to the right temperature, it may be covered with a multitude of inhabitants, and astronomers may rise and say that the revolutions among the associated suns of our stellar system, of their planets and satellites are going on in the science of our astronomers, they will foresee the ultimate coming together of all these suns into one common globe. And not this only, for they will predict the final coming together of all the stellar systems of the visible universe into one mass of matter.

When this mass is first collected, it will be intensely heated, and the final destruction of motion in the suns and system of suns as they come together. The heat will be radiated outward into the space in which the one mass of matter will be gradually cooled. During the cooling there will be the same play and brilliant interchange of heat, light, electricity, magnetism, and other imponderable forces that are now upon this earth. As the cooling proceeds, the action of these forces will diminish; when 77 degrees is reached, light will cease and darkness will fill the universe. As each vibration of heat leaves the material mass, it will expand outward at the rate of 192,500 miles per second in all directions, in the form of a swelling sphere. When the temperature of absolute cold is reached (—493.2 degrees) the last vibration of heat will leave the mass of matter, and the whole of this space through all infinity of space and time.

Supposing, however, the ethereal fluid which fills the visible portion of the universe is limited in extent, so that the last vibration of heat will reach its boundaries and cease, what then will comes of the force of the universe and of the doctrine of the conversion of force.

The amount of National Bank currency issued during the week ending to-day is $191,636. From this is to be deducted currency returned, including worn out notes, amounting to $21,000—32 leaving its actual circulation at this date $238,567,569. The amount of fractional currency received by the Treasurer from the printers during the past week was $362,140. The amount shipped during the week to the Assistant Treasurers and National Banks was $349,000. The securities held by the Treasurer of the United States, in trust for National Banks, reported to day, were as follows: For circulating notes, $346,550,650; for deposits of public moneys, $38,850,000; total, $379,100,650.

GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

The Chicago *Tribune* describes St. Louis as "a collection of houses on the west bank of the Mississippi, directly opposite Illinoistown."

A meerschaum pipe three hundred years old, was recently sold in Chicago for one hundred dollars. It had belonged to that virtuous and amiable woman, Lola Montez.

The Soldiers' Fair at Baltimore netted one thousand dollars per day for six days.

The Chicago *Times* says: "Two cities which desire to be considered rivals of Chicago have each made another attempt to get up metropolitan sensation. Milwaukee has another case of infanticide, and Cincinnati has opened a dra m shop which cost three hundred thousand dollars. Try again, gentlemen." Chicago can truthfully boast pre eminence in crime.

The Columbus (O.) *Journal* reports that the packers of that city are hard at work, and are daily salting down a large number of hogs. They report that the per cent. of lard so far this season has been large; that it will equal, if not exceed that of last season.

Number of deaths in Philadelphia during the past week 226 as against 228 same period last year. Of the total, 137 were children.

Zanesville, Ohio, is to have a street railroad, at a cost of $50,000.

An Indianapolis journal noticing the performance of the Ghent Opera Troupe, at the Morrison Opera House, in that city, Saturday evening, says: "L'Africane is more popular with our citizens than Il Trovatore." Very likely. The African is now the popular card all over the country and draws immensely.

School teachers of Philadelphia are moving for an increase of salaries, and Councils are, it is said, favorably disposed. According to an analysis of wages published, twenty four male teachers receive $4 10 per day; eighteen male teachers, $2 71 per day; fifty, $2 00 per day, and fifty-nine female teachers receive any where from $1 25 to 76 cents a day. Salaries range from $1,500 to $280 per annum.

Monday night the citizens of Nashville gave a banquet to the Congressional exercitionists. The reception was generally cordial, though Gen. Ben Wade was hissed for some remarks about reconstruction.

The live stock ring at the Union Stock Yards, Chicago, who have for the past two months refused to give details of their transactions to the press, have finally caved in, and will hereafter simply pay fifty dollars.

The pork packers of Springfield, Illinois, are doing a large business. The hogs are heavier and of a better quality than they were last year.

There is a great demand in East Tennessee for laborers of all kinds on railroads, and a fine opportunity is thus afforded to men seeking employment.

The printers of Springfield, Illinois, are making extensive preparations for the annual festival, which will be given at the Leland Hotel on the 17th of January. It will be the grand festal affair of the winter season.

Everything is getting played out through the South. Notice of a meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, is advertised for a week, but the "Fingers" didn't come to time.

Rich lead mines have been discovered in Williamsburg, Ky.

Negotiations are pending for the introduction into Canada by the end of the year of Bell telephone, of a large force of laborers for the Central Pacific railroad.

Frequent earthquake shocks in Sacramento and other points along the Pacific coast, and the inhabitants think many things are passing away.

Coffee County, in Tennessee, is being colonized by Germans. Some fifteen or twenty families from our State have purchased lands around Concord and Oak Hill, and are settling. They have already laid out one eighty acre and one thousand dollars for lands, and the cry is "still they come." They are excellent, well to do and good citizens, and there is ample room for all such.

Latest advices give assurance that the East Indian telegraph line through China is to be a success.

An Idaho letter says the business of counterfeiting gold dust is carried on to a large extent, and the authorities of the Territory have been called on to suppress it.

The Toronto *Leader* insists upon the feasibility of deepening the Welland, Huron-Ontario ship canal, and thinks that with a reasonable amount of aid from the Western States the enterprise may soon be undertaken.

An interesting session of the "Wisconsin Union Religious Convention" was recently held at Milwaukee. The prominent speakers sharply denounced such public amusements as the theatre, the ball, and the circus, and held that Christians could only countenance such amusements as were consistent with the ideal of a Christian home.

The Mayor of Cincinnati asks the Councils for an increase of the police force.

The temperance movement is making great headway in St. Louis. A temple is to be built, and $5,000 has been subscribed.

The Cincinnati Councils are determined to have the laws against gambling and gift enterprises enforced. A gambler has just been fined $100 and sent to jail for ten days.

The St. Louis *Dispatch* gives a detailed description of a large number of private buildings which are now going up in different parts of that city. They are, as a rule, very handsome, and indeed in most of our large cities, suburban residences are in great demand.

The Chicago "sports" are alarmed by the precedent established in the conviction of Mollie Tressel, that it is only a misdemeanor punishable with a year's imprisonment, for a barrel to kill a gambler. He is known to the aforesaid sports, that our laws make a distinction in favor of "fancy females," and that the late Washington case of Mary Harris, she went "scot free" for killing a man who had seduced her under promise of marriage.

Immense Revenue Frauds

The Darling Committee, which visited New York to investigate the frauds upon the revenue, has returned to Washington. It is understood that the frauds brought to light by only a partial and superficial investigation, almost exceed belief, and the developments are startling in their character. The simple matter of whisky frauds, by which spirits are sold as high wines, regularly branded, but which has never paid a tax, and which are sold at from $1 50 to $2 00 per gallon, the street, at $2 50 to $3 75 per gallon. Distillers of small capacity have been secretly started in cellars, and in the rear of stables, in barns and garrets, where from one to two barrels a day are made. So great is the demand for these illicit goods, that the whole force of the revenue with orders, and some of them had to be filled by contract.

Men of high standing are engaged in buying this dutch whisky, with perfect impunity, the risk of detection being very small. Some of the liberties being many of them directly implicated in the whisky frauds, have been arrested in the few months since their appointment. These men were all recently appointed under the present Administration, and it is said that many of them seem to have been selected with special reference to the filling loads for political purposes.

One man, who had the disposal of much of the Louisiana Purchase, made five millions of dollars in two months by dealing in these lands. Revenue agents and collectors were appointed by the thousand, and deeply interested parties bought for them by dealers in whisky of the Johnson Club, and speaking generally, nearly every one of the officers who helped secure the appointment of men who would "stand by the President" was a party to these frauds, and on the other to raise money for these ends. It is believed that half the whisky in bond in the city of New York is owned by men by first securing permission to withdraw it for export, and then filling the casks with water instead.

It is understood that the Committee are satisfied that the frauds are of a gigantic character, and that they contemplate recommending a reduction of the tax to 50 cents a gallon, or the imposition of a tax of $1 per gallon on the whole amount of whisky in bond, and the abolition of all small establishments, or both.

In the matter of tobacco, large frauds of this kind were discovered. A man's stock is seized for false returns. He is advised to consult a friend, who tells him that he will have to make a compromise and the parties divide results.

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In the committee, in investigating the frauds in the Custom House in New York, have discovered a state of affairs similar to those given above, and many leading Johnson men, and even the White House household are implicated.

The whisky interest in New York and throughout the country has been using its influence to secure the removal of Commissioner Rollins, as he has constantly stood in their way. A very large sum would be used to further the committee, but the effect has only been to increase its vigilance.

Startling disclosures from the committee have been reported at Cincinnati. The committee will probably visit that place some time after the holidays.

Santa Anna and Mr. Seward.

On the 12th of December, 1861, Santa Anna wrote from St. Thomas, informing the Executive that he had arrived at Havana, and was in Mexico to repel the invaders, and appealing to him for assistance. The Secretary of State at first waited him in his island home, and on arriving in New York, he summoned Santa Anna to Washington. We are sure the General—without knowing him—does not desire to play any such role.

Lamirande,

Weekly Commercial.

THE HOUSEKEEPER.

BEEF STEWED WITH ONIONS.—Cut some tender beef in small pieces, and season it with pepper and salt, slice some onions and add to it, with water enough in the stew-pan to make a gravy, let it stew slowly till the beef is thoroughly done, then add some pieces of butter rolled in flour to make a rich gravy. Cold beef may be done in the same way, only the onions must be stewed first, and the meat added. If the water should stew away too much put in a little.

VEAL POT PIE.—Cut up some veal, (the best part of the neck is preferable,) wash and season it with pepper and salt; line the sides of your pot with paste, put in the veal with some pieces of paste rolled out and cut in squares, cut up some butter rolled in flour and add to it, pour in as much water as will cover it, and lay a sheet of paste on the top, leaving an opening in the centre; put the lid on the pot and put it over a moderate fire, let it cook slowly till the meat is done; pinch the soft crust on a dish, then put the meat over it, and on the top lay the hard crust, with the brown side up. Serve the gravy in a boat. To have the crust of a pot pie brown, set the pot on a few coals before the fire, and turn it frequently.

GIBLET PIE.—Wash clean your giblets, put them in a stew pan, season with pepper, salt and a little butter rolled in flour, cover them with water, stew them till they are very tender. Line the sides of your pie dish with paste, put in the giblets, and if the gravy is not quite thick enough, add a little more butter rolled in flour. Let it boil once, pour in the gravy, put on the top crust, leaving an opening in the centre of it in the form of a square; ornament this with leaves of the paste. Set the pie in the oven, and when the crust is done take it out.

MINT SAUCE.—Choose some young mint, pick and wash it; chop it very fine, and pour on enough vinegar to wet it. To every gill of vinegar allow two gills of brown sugar. The sugar should be dissolved in the vinegar, then poured on the mint.

CHRISTMAS PLUM PUDDING FOR A LARGE FAMILY.—Half a pound of beef suet, one pound of flour, half a pound of dried currants, half a pound of stoned raisins, two eggs, nutmeg and cinnamon to the taste, half a spoonful of salt. Shred the suet, chop it fine, and rub it through the flour. Wash, pick, and dry the currants; seed the raisins, mix the currants and raisins together, and dredge over them as much flour as will adhere to them. Beat the eggs till they are very thick and light, and add enough milk to them to wet the flour. Add the spice very gradually, then the suet, which must be floured before it is put in, or it will sink at the bottom of the cake and burn. Beat the whole very hard for fifteen minutes. If it is liked in a tin or iron pan, butter the pan, line the bottom and sides with thick white or brown paper, butter the paper well, and pour in the mixture. Bake in a moderate oven five hours.

BUCKWHEAT CAKES.—One pint of buckwheat meal, one quart of water, salt just to taste, one gill of home-made yeast. Mix the water (which should not be lukewarm if the weather is cold) with the meal, add the salt and yeast, beat it well; then light, bake them on a griddle. To ascertain the quality, point on a little of the batter, spread it so as to form a cake about the size of a breakfast plate. The cakes should be very smooth at the edges. When they are done enough to turn them, when brown on both sides, put on a little butter on the plate, place the cake on it, butter the top, bake another and put it on, butter it and send them to the table. Buckwheat cakes are much better if they are sent to the table with only one on a plate at a time.

CHARCOAL.—All sorts of glass vessels and other utensils may be purified from any retained smells of every kind, in the easiest and most perfect manner, by rinsing them out well with charcoal powder, after the grossest impurities have been scoured off with sand and potash. Rubbing the teeth, and washing the mouth with fine charcoal powder will render the teeth beautifully white, and the breath perfectly sweet, where an offensive breath has been owing to a scorbutic disposition in the gums. Putrid water is immediately deprived of its bad smell by charcoal. Often meat, fish, etc., from intense heat, long keeping, are likely to pass into a state of corruption, a simple and pure mode of keeping them sound and healthful is, is by putting a few pieces of charcoal, each the size of an egg, into a saucepan wherein the fish or flesh is to be boiled.

LINEN RAGS should be carefully saved, for they are extremely useful in sickness, they have become dirty and worn by cleaning silver, etc., wash them and scrape them into lint.

ESSENCE OF CELERY.—This is prepared by soaking for a fortnight a half ounce of the seed of celery in a quarter pint of brandy. A few drops will flavor a pint of soup or broth, equal to a head of celery.

Thick Soled Gaiters.

When the celebrated physician Abernethy died, report said, that beside a will of one interest to his heirs, in a pecuniary point of view, there was found among his effects a sealed envelope, said to contain the secret of his great success in the healing art, and also a rule of living, the following of which will insure longevity.

A large price was paid for the sealed envelope. It was found to contain only these words: "To insure continued health and ripe old age, keep the head cool, the stomach, and the feet warm."

Dry feet are warm feet, generally, if the stem is healthy. To keep the system healthy, the circulation must be good. The circulation is not good without exercise, and exercise can only be really valuable when gotten up by walking. Riding in a carriage is not exercise at all; it is merely inhaling the air. This is very well as far as it goes, but the lungs are not in all play without the limbs are walking. Horseback exercise is very good, and an improvement on carriage riding, but it is not the kind of healthgetting play of the muscles nature demands. It is action—action of the entire body—and walking only will procure it. Now, the following article, from a lady of England, understand it, and profit by its teachings. They walk miles per day, and any of our pale beauties desire to know how the English keep up their fine color, clear complexion and superb busts, we will them that it is out-door exercise walking in the open air, filling the lungs with pure oxygen by rapid movement on a sharp October day, when the sun shines brightly and the clear blue sky is above. This is the secret of the rich blood of the English women, and their almost universally fine looks and naturally beauty at forty, when at that age our American woman are pale, shallow and wrinkled.

To enjoy a walk thick soles are needed. Neat, well fitting, calf skin high gaiters, neatly laced, will always "set off" a pretty foot, and improve a homely one. To guard that sensitive portion of the human frame (for the sole of the foot is keenly sensitive to the changes from heat to cold, or dryness to dampness), the boot sole should be thick, and as well made as human ingenuity can do it. Then even in frost weather, or in a rain storm, the foot can be protected; that insured, all is well with the lady.

Ladies, walk more; take long walks; set tired—no matter how tired—tired muscles in any well woman eighteen to forty-eight, only proves that they need to be used; flabby muscles prove that action is wanted, and such muscles also prove that the system lacks tone. They require a violin with the keys loose; the strings are without vibration, and the instrument is dead. Buy the best of calf half boots, ladies; exercise in them till you are well enough to go out, well clad, in all weather. Wear no rubbers, if you can avoid it. They are bad for the feet. If you need to paddle in the slush and soft snow of spring, put on rubbers, for the feet must be kept warm and dry, but use them as little as possible. Wear, when out of doors, double-soled shoes; take all the open air exercise you can by walking, and you will be, in your old age, as fine looking as you are now; and, moreover, the next generation will be as proud of you as the young fry of Old England of their stately mothers. We have seen in Hyde Park, London, on a fair day, hundreds of grandmothers, fresh and nearly handsome; and scores of mothers with marriageable daughters, which, had we been in the marrying line, we should hardly have known which to have popped the question to, so dazzling was the real beauty and youth of both. Our American ladies can possess these charms and carry them into the age of three score, if they will walk more in the open air, and inhale daily the health-giving properties which can be obtained in no other way, wearing out a couple of pairs of tip-top dollar gaiters per year. We both start one ten dollar pair of walking shoes will save twenty doctors' visits at five dollars each. Take your choice, ladies.

THE CAPITAL.

Special Dispatch to the Pittsburgh Commercial.

WASHINGTON, December 28.

Re-Organization of the Treasury Department.

The Ways and Means Committee resumed their sessions to-day, and took up the bill for the re-organization of the Treasury Department. There seemed to be a disposition to report a bill paying the Department Clerks in gold, on the ground that if a specific increase in pay be made, it would be impossible for Congress to reduce the salary when we reached specie payments. The surplus gold in the Treasury would be more than sufficient to pay the Clerks.

Death of Lieut. Wilson.

Senator Wilson reached here to-day, and for the first time heard of the death of his son, Lieut. Wilson, of the Sixth Regular Cavalry, which occurred in Texas last week.

The Test Oath.

The Supreme Court did not give a decision on the test oath to-day as we expected, but intimated that a decision would be made on January 3d, when the Court re-assembled.

Surrat.

The Navy Department does not expect the steamer, with Surratt on board, to reach here before January 30th, as she is a screw vessel and slow.

Dr. Mudd's Application.

The application for a writ of habeas corpus in the case of Dr. Mudd will not be considered by the Supreme Court at present. The Judges doubt the propriety of giving it original jurisdiction, on the ground that the court is one of appeal on points of law, and that if the writ be granted, Mudd cannot be produced in court before a full term. The matter will probably be suspended until Judge Wayne, of the Supreme Court, holds a term of the United States Circuit Court, in Alabama.

A National Convention.

The Democratic Resident Committee, Chas. Mason, of Iowa, Chairman, have a meeting to-morrow night, to decide on the propriety of calling a national convention, the delegates to be selected in the usual way.

The White House.

In view of the general dullness otherwise, some surprise was manifested to-day at the ante-room of the White House being filled with persons seeking an audience with the President.

Unfounded Report.

There is no truth in the report evidently put forward to affect the gold market that the Ways and Means Committee have agreed on a bill to dispose of thirty million dollars worth of gold now in the Treasury.

The Rebel Assets in London.

The Government Counsel in the case of Frazer, Trenholm & Co., pending in the English courts, involving the rights of the Government to the possession of twenty millions of property, arrived here to-day, and had a conference with the President, Attorney General Stanberry and Secretary Seward. He will receive written instructions in the premises and sail immediately for London.

The New French Minister.

The fact that the new French Minister should dine with Secretary Seward on the second day of his arrival in Washington, and that the retiring Minister Montholon should also be present, puzzles much of diplomatic officials here, but by the *quid nunes* of the State Department is construed as showing most amicable relations between the governments represented around the Christmas turkey.

WASHINGTON, December 26.

THE SUPREME COURT.

On account of the absence of Justice Grier, who is to deliver the opinion of the decision of the Supreme Court in the test oath cases, it was not delivered this morning. The Court was adjourned from Friday until Thursday of next week. The opinion may not be expected till Monday of the following week. No decision has yet been given in the application for a writ of *habeas corpus* in the case of Dr. Mudd. It is stated that Chief Justice Chase doubts the jurisdiction of the Court. If it is not specially decided by the Court, the action of the Executive will be invoked to order the release of prisoners condemned by Military Commissions, as it is claimed, some within the terms of the recent decision of the Supreme Court in the conspiracy cases.

RECONSTRUCTION OF VIRGINIA.

It is rumored that John Minor Botts and Alex. Rives have prepared a bill for the reorganization of Virginia upon the North Carolina plan. But no civilian lives in a law.

The constitutionality of the civil rights law will soon be tested in a case before the Supreme Court, which has been made up in Maryland.

FESTIVAL FOR THE POOR.

A Committee are arranging for a festival for New Year's for the benefit of destitute freedmen living near Arlington Heights. Contributions are solicited here and elsewhere.

THE SAN DOMINGO TREATY.

The impression prevails in diplomatic circles that the revolution in Spain will be carried to a successful termination.

CONGRESSMAN TRIMBLE.

Hon. Lawrence A. Trimble, of the First Congressional District of Kentucky, who has with others been investigating whisky frauds in New York, arrived to-day. It is thought his place in the committee will be vacated next month, as he will probably be the Democratic nominee for Governor of that State, and resign his seat in Congress.

CUSTOMS RECEIPTS.

The receipts from customs for the week ending on the 22d were $1,900,000, of which upwards of a million was at the port of New York. December, next to August, is the worst month in the year for customs receipts. An increase is anticipated in the next two months on spring importations.

FORGERIES.

James G Smith, of Battle Creek, Michigan, and J. S. Tobias, of Bradford, New York, have been indicted for forging county and pension claims. The former will be tried at Detroit, Michigan, and the latter at Albany. Tobias confessed his guilt.

GOLD IN THE TREASURY.

The Treasury to day holds gold to the amount of ninety-five millions, five hundred and seventy-seven thousand dollars and eighty-six cents, of which seventeen millions, seven hundred and thirty-nine thousand one hundred and sixty dollars, are held in gold certificates. The balance, about seventy-eight millions, belongs to the Government.

DEATH OF AN OFFICER.

Lieut. H. S. Wilson, Sixth United States Cavalry, only son of Senator Wilson, of Massachusetts, died recently at Austin, Texas.

RECEIPTS FROM INTERNAL REVENUE.

The receipts of Internal Revenue on Monday were $622,708; to-day, $875,000.

THE WHISKY FRAUDS.

Many removals of Inspectors of Distilleries have been made, and more are to follow. A determined effort will be made to secure the benefit of the law to the Treasury. Not more than a fourth due to the Government from this source has been paid, owing to inefficient and corrupt officers.

HONORABLE MENTION.

Major General Sheridan, commanding the Department of the Gulf, announces the following names of persons deserving honorable mention for faithful and meritorious services rendered in the United States General Hospital, near New Orleans, as nurses and attendants during the prevalence of cholora there: Robert Tucker, citizen, employee; Stephen Van Norman, private Co. K, 5th United States cavalry; Geo. Cahill, steward, and Chas. Ayre, citizen employee. Gen. Sheridan in his order of honorable mention, says: "Without official performance of duty in ordinary subordinate capacity, while constantly exposed to certain and appalling fatal pestilence, and without any of the stimulating influences and excitements of the battlefield, is praiseworthy and noble in the highest degree. Such conduct is none the different in kind, is not less in merit or lower in courage than that which, under the encouragement by applause and incited by the prospect of reward and fame, rushes bravely to the deadly assault, the satisfaction that the valuable services of these men are acknowledged. The soldiers whose names are the foregoing list are recommended to the favorable consideration of their immediate commanding officer.

ILLNESS OF GEN. GRANT.

General Grant is quite ill, having been confined to his room since his return from the west on Saturday evening. No serious results are anticipated.

DESIGNATED DEPOSITORY.

The Colorado National Bank, of Denver, Colorado, has been designated as a depository of public moneys by the United States Treasurer.

THE WAR IN CANDIA.

A letter has been received in this city from the Grecian Archipelago, dated December 21, stating that it is believed the Greeks will be able to continue the war with greater vigor. Colonel Lopkow, nephew of Marco Bozzaris, has arrived at the head of a regiment of infantry, and two more regiments, one artillery and the other Garibaldians landed successfully, about 4,000 men, from the Kingdom of Greece, have gone to Candia to fight against the Turks. A Turkish iron clad had been wrecked off the island of Santos. Another Turkish steamer had been sunk near Candia. All the crew except twelve men were lost.

MEXICO.

NEW YORK, December 26.—The steamship Merrimac, from Havana on the 18th, brings advices from the City of Mexico, to the 12th. Doubt and uncertainty as to the result of the civil dissensions are universal throughout the Empire. Forwas at Orizaba on the 10th, where, it is said, he will remain for the present. Previous reports that the Church party were giving up its cause are confirmed.

Rumors of the evacuation of San Luis, Zacatecas and Aguas Calientes by the Imperialists, are corroborated. Mazatlan was only given up after a fight. The Imperialists are occupying the greater portion of the country, and converging upon the City of Mexico.

The Liberal authorities protested energetically against the seizure of customs at Vera Cruz by French merchants.

NEW YORK, December 26.—A Matamoras dispatch states that General Sedgwick has been ordered under arrest, and Col. Brown placed in command.

SAN FRANCISCO, December 25.—The steamer Panama, seven and a half days from Mazatlan, reports the Liberal forces about to leave Mazatlan for Guadalajara, in pursuit of the French, and that the imperialists still held San Blas.

GALVESTON, December 26.—Colonel Plato, late of the Quartermaster's department, has just arrived here from Matamoras. He saw the daily *Ranchero* of the 20th, which stated on the authority of Flint, the Mexican correspondent, that Escobedo had been captured and hung outside the city by Canales and Cortina. Escobedo had been heard from the day previous to the reported execution.

NEW ORLEANS, December 25.—Late news from Matamoras seems to confirm the reported hanging of Escobedo by Canales. It is believed foreign instigated the butchery.

SAN FRANCISCO, December 26.—Liberal advices from Mexico to the 16th say Colima was still in the hands of the Imperialists; although it was surrounded by the Liberal army, which was under the command of five Generals, each was under the other, and they would not combine so as to capture the town. Arrangements were reported and generally believed that Escobedo had been captured and hung outside the city by Canales and Cortina. Escobedo had been heard from the day previous to the reported execution.

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BY FOREIGN MAILS

NEW YORK, December 26.—The steamship Allemania, with Southampton dates to the 16th, has arrived.

The principal hotels in Ireland are closely watched for Stephens. Arrests are continued in all parts of Ireland. The Waterford magistrates have requested additional troops. Artillery is daily sent to Ireland.

Six companies of French troops remain in Rome till the last of January. The French Government will not interfere in Italian affairs.

LONDON, December 26.—Sir A. Buzzard has gone to Dublin to command a division there. Some powder destined for the interior counties has been seized. Eight men were arrested in Dublin on Monday. On one was found Greek fire and the materials to make it.

The Russian Imperial Ukase announces that the Fenelons with Rome are broken off, and all affairs relating to Roman Catholicism in Russia and Poland will hereafter be under Government direction.

The American schooner General Sherman has been captured by pirates in the river leading to Pekin, the crew tied to the masts and the vessel burned.

PARIS, the French troops left Rome, the Pope made an address, full of hope of the ultimate stability of his power, both temporal and spiritual. Papal reforms were also promised.

The *Nazione* publishes the following speech addressed by the Pope to the officers of the Sixth Legion, on the occasion of the unanimous leave of departure. I wish to bid you farewell. You left France to restore the Holy See. On this account you have obtained by the unanimous good wishes of the nation. The nation now returns to France, but I believe that many conscripts will there be enlisted. Capital to be received in the same manner as when it left France, but I doubt whether lots will be drawn. The Emperor and the French nation would not come to the gates of Rome. It has been said that the work is complete. No, she is far from it, and if she exists as she is, it is because there remains this scrap of territory whereof Rome is. Still, 67,000 men will be left here a longer remains, the flag of the revolution will float over the Eternal City with murder. He was assailed by attempts are made to persuade me that Rome, by the nature of its position, cannot be the capital of Italy. I am tranquil because I have confidence in the Divine protection. Go to France with my benediction, but those who are going to approach the Emperor tell him that I pray for him and that he must do what he will also do something. France is the eldest daughter of the Church, but it does not suffice to wear the title. The right to wear it must be proved by deeds.

FIRE AT FREEPORT.

Six Bulk Oil Boats Destroyed.

Special Dispatch to the Pittsburgh Commercial.

FREEPORT, December 23.

About seven o'clock last evening a fire broke out among some oil boats, lying at the works of the Pennsylvania Salt Manufacturing Company, Natrona, Pa., burning six bulk oil boats belonging to Messrs. Fisher Brothers. W. S. T.

THE CASE OF DR. PRESTLEY.

He Resigns His Pastoral Relations with his Church—His Farewell Sermon.

The Monongahela Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church, met yesterday morning in the U. P. Church, (Rev. Mr. Coleman's,) Birmingham, the Moderator, Rev. S. B. Reed, in the chair. There was a full attendance of the members of the Presbytery. Rev. James Prestley, D. D., presented his resignation as Pastor of the Second United Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh. The Presbytery, by a unanimous vote, agreed that as a pastor had been circulated among the members of Dr. Prestley's congregation asking for his re-installment as Pastor, the resignation be referred to the congregation for their decision. Dr. Prestley then rose and said that he did not wish his resignation to be referred, but it was now before the Presbytery for their acceptance. Under these circumstances, Dr. Prestley read his letter of resignation, and Dr. Prestley was relieved from his pastoral relations.

On Sunday afternoon last, Mr. Prestley delivered his farewell address to his congregation. He said that in the unusual length of time our pastoral relations with them, he hoped they would remain as they always have enjoyed, and that the brotherly and Christian spirit which had heretofore existed between them would never be broken. The occasion was a solemn and affecting one, and his remarks brought tears to the eyes of nearly every member of the congregation.

Some evil-disposed person has circulated a rumor of late that Mr. Prestley intends leaving the city. This, we are authorized to say upon reliable authority, is a case of fabrication, as Mr. Prestley will still remain here and actively engage in the duties which have been brought against him.

THE VERSAILLES HOMICIDE.

The Alleged Murderer Gives Himself Into Custody—He is Committed for Trial.

Our readers are familiar with the particulars of the murder of William Dodds, who was struck with a pick in the side by John Way, at the tavern of George Weir, near Turtle Creek, in Versailles township, on the evening of the 12th instant. After committing the assault, Way fled, and his whereabouts remained unknown, it having been generally supposed that he had left the county. Yesterday morning, Way, in company with his father, came to the city to secure the advice of Thomas M. Marshall, Esq., as to what would be the best course to pursue. Mr. Marshall advised him to deliver himself up, and Way accordingly delivered himself into the custody of officer Seth Wilmot, who conveyed him before Alderman Jones, A. Strain, of the Tenth ward. Way stated that he had been in the vicinity of Turtle Creek since the night of the affray, but had not went to do anything until he received legal advice. He admits having struck Dodds with the pick, but states that he was justifiable in doing so, as the deceased and some others had beaten and abused him badly. Officer Wilmot lodged an information against Way before Alderman Strain, charging him with murder. He was accordingly committed to the County Jail, to await trial at the January term of the Court of Quarter and Terminer. Way's father and Marshall as counsel, who, we understand, will make an application to Court on Saturday next, asking for the release of the accused on bail, on the grounds that the homicide was justifiable.

TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY.

A fire occurred at Havana, Mason county, Illinois, which burned out eighteen business firms, and destroyed property worth $100,000.

The Central Hotel in San Francisco was burned on the morning of the 24th. Four men perished in the flames.

Fourteen inches of rain have fallen in California during the past two months. The roads, bridges, levees and grain crops suffered seriously.

Col. R. A. Wainwright, of the United States Ordnance Corps, committed suicide at Benicia barracks, near San Francisco, on Sunday last.

The New Orleans and Belize Telegraph line has been leased by the United States and Europe Telegraph News Association. This will gain some ten hours in news from Mexico, Texas and Havana.

Wallace's kerosene works, Brooklyn, together with 2,500 barrels of oil, were burned on Monday.

The President, on Monday, in conversation with a friend, expressed his unabated confidence in the final triumph of his restoration policy. He also took occasion to condemn the project agitated in Congress for the disarmament of the present Southern governments South, and declared that it would release those State governments from the payment of their State debts, and impose them upon the United States.

The steamship Columbia, from Glasgow, arrived at New York on the 25th. The Damascus, from Liverpool, arrived at Portland, Maine, the same day.

They celebrated Christmas in Charleston by killing two negroes.

The temporary trestle work over Elk Creek, on the Hamilton and Dayton Railroad, broke down Christmas day, carrying with it the engine of the southward bound passenger train. Four persons were injured, two seriously.

STATE ITEMS.

The interest of the Pennsylvania Central in the Oil Creek Railroad—one third—has been purchased by the New York Central, giving the latter corporation the control of the property.

Hon. Galusha A. Grow, Ex-Speaker of the National House of Representatives, and candidate for United States Senator, has returned to Hazleton from Washington.

A bear weighing over four hundred pounds was killed a few days ago in Washington township, Clarion county, by a Mr. Proper.

The Gettysburg Cemetery Manument is to be completed by July 1, 1868. The statue of General Reynolds is to be erected in the centre, and not on the spot where he fell. It is intimated that the Freedmen's Lincoln Monument Association will apply for permission to purchase a bronze statue of Abraham Lincoln in the cemetery.

A horrible accident occurred at the saw mill of Thomas Liston, Esq., in Addison township, Somerset county, on the 15th inst. William Lenhart, a young man of twenty-two years of age, employed at the mill, clambered on top of the water wheel for the purpose of cutting away the ice which clogged it. The wheel which revolved below, in a stone walled pit, suddenly started, carrying the unfortunate man down with it, tearing his head from his body as it dashed into the pit.

A Clarion paper says: There is some talk of an attempt being made to form a new county out of parts of Clarion, Armstrong, and perhaps a part of Butler, with Brady's Bend for the county seat. This movement, so far as it has taken shape, is advocated by a few interested individuals, and we cannot learn that any considerable number of the people in the counties named are too large, and the citizens of all of them would be opposed to the division of their counties in any way.

James H. Clarke has been appointed whisky inspector for Westmoreland county. The *Greensburg Argus*, in noticing his appointment, suggests that he be treated kindly—and often.

The World of Fashion.

The fashion correspondent of the New York *World* writes: "The new fashioned walking dress is invariably composed of a double skirt, the under one just long enough to escape contact with the pavement, the upper one varying in length with the style and taste of the wearer. The under petticoat may be made in folds at the edge, or may be plain and hemmed in any fantastic style. It is frequently of colored merino or cashmere, the color repeated in the trimming or cashmere, the color repeated in the trimming of the bonnet or in the casaque. Young persons are permitted bright colored petticoats if they always go out attended by their mammas or a *femme de chambre*. The upper skirt is cut, I believe, in six pieces straight in front and at the back; no folds at the waist, and almost no fullness at the lower edge, which is the subject of a thousand capricious variations; plain, scalloped, quilted Greek and Roman patterns, and what not; the edges and thereabouts set off with either jet or ribbon, or galloon, or fur trimming. The casaque is the covering most worn with this style of dress, but this is no longer of a mere overhanging sack style. The bodice in the well known sack style. The position is straight in front and in the back, and pointed at the edges. Small hoops are admitted under the walking dress.

FINANCE AND TRADE.

WEDNESDAY, December 26, 1866.

Gold experienced another slight decline today. The market continues weak and excited. The principal speculative supporters of gold are having a hard time. In New York a firm dealing in gold has failed for $900,000, and something like a baker's dozen of the speculative stock dants at the gold room are reported to have been unable to meet their contracts. While its chief supporters are thus reported to put up the premium, there are many considerations which continue to depress it. In the first place the demand for gold for customs is now quite small, and the amount already on the market is more than sufficient to meet it. Then on the first of January there becomes due on the various descriptions of Government bonds, gold interest to the amount of $10,490,310. In addition to these immediately depressing influences, the fact that there is little prospect of any considerable export demand at this season of the year must be considered. The reduction of the rate of interest by the Bank of England will naturally tend to promote an increased demand for cotton if not for Government bonds, and the heavy supply of exchange which will be furnished against the latter sources is likely to be sufficient to supply the wants of the country for some time to come without the shipment of specie, which under other circumstances would be necessary. The weight of opinion seems to be that the Secretary of the Treasury will not be forced into any financial policy which Congress will map out in detail for him, but will himself exercise the discretion that has been made that all unissued twenty dollar greenback fractional currency be withdrawn. Should this be done, it will be a serious blow to the speculative interest, as it will reduce the volume of currency by the amount of the receipts from California by steamer ($1,416,292.

—A little more than ten millions of coin interest on the public debt, will fall due on the 1st of January. According to the Treasury Department Report, on that day, $10,490,310 of the following amount of bonds were outstanding, the interest upon which is payable at that time:

Six per cents of January, 1847	$9,415,250
Six per cents of March, 1848	4,308,941
Five per cents of June, 1858	20,000,000
Five per cents of January, 1861	7,022,000
Six per cents of February, 1861	18,415,000
Six per cents of July and August, 1861	50,000,000
Six per cents of July, August, 1861, Seventies	140,000,000
Six per cents of March 2, 1861	1,016,000
Six per cents of March 3, 1863	75,000,000
Six per cents of June 30, 1864	195,000,000
Six per cents of March 3, 1865	3,140,000
Six per cents of 1881	2,290,000
Six per cents of the new issue, estimated	400,000
Total	$570,200,191

The week's receipts of coin at the Philadelphia Mint were $50,000.

The receipts per river and rail, since our last, were 2,177 bbls. flour; 93 bbls apples; 210 sacks corn; 621 sacks barley; 105 sacks oats; 311 sacks wheat; 350 sacks potatoes; 50 sacks peanuts.

Flour—The market is dull, but prices have not changed. Fresh commands are not picked 30c.

FLOUR—The receipts since our last are large, amounting to 2,177 bbls. Prices, however, have undergone no change, and the market is active. We note sales of 100 bbls Spring at $11.75; 200 bbls Pennsylvania at $11 75; 200 bbls Jenkins's Lilly, at $12 50; 100 bbls Amber Iowa, at $12 00; 200 bbls Crescent, at $11 50; 200 bbls Spring at $12 00, and 50 bbls do, in small lots at $11 75 @ $12 00. The business has been exceedingly small, and with, says the *Price Current*, a further decline in good, a further concession of 25c @ 50c was asked by holders of common grades of State and Western flour. There has been no pressure to force business, however, and the market is not governed by it. The speculative interest was wholly confined to the current wants of the local trade, the sales not exceeding 6,000 bbls. Of Canada flour, there have been jobbing sales at $13 @ $13 25.

In Philadelphia, the market on Monday was very dull, says the *American*, but prices were unchanged. There was no demand for shipment, and the home trade purchases made did not exceed 1,000 bbls, except to supply immediate wants. Sales of a few hundred barrels at $8 00@8 25 ₱ bbl for superfine; $9 00@9 25 for extra; $9 50@10 50 for extra family; $12 00@13 50 for Pennsylvania and Ohio do, and $14 00@16 00 for fancy brands, according to quality. Rye flour may be quoted at $7 25 @ 7 50. Nothing doing in Corn meal.

GRAIN—The receipts of wheat continue light, and holders are not anxious to sell. Prices are nominally unchanged. Sales of Spring at $2 30 @ $2 35, and White at $2 50. In Philadelphia the market continues excessively dull. We quote Pennsylvania Red at $2 20@2 30 Southern do at $2 40@2 45, and White at $2 70@2 80. Rye may be quoted at $1 30 @1 35.

OATS—We note sales of 100 bushels on the track, at 60c.

CORN—One car at the elevator sold at 85c. Sales of 10 bushels by the depot at $1 20 is reported. One car shelled corn on the track, at East Liberty, at 80c, is reported.

BAY—The general features of the market remain as at last noted. The demand absorbs nearly all the receipts, and the market is active. Sales are reported of 200 tons baled at $20 00 @ 20 50. At the weigh beam, the prices are from $31 00@36 00.

HOPS—The receipts of dressed continue good, and the weather being favorable, prices, as low reported, are still ruling. Packers are buying at from 40@42c. In the Diamond Market light weights sold at 38@39c. In Detroit, on Monday, dressed hogs commanded $7 00@7 50 for the wholesale prices and $8 00@8 50 for retail. Lard is in good demand at 12½c for prime to choice kegs and bbls, and 13c for leaf. Tallow is dull at 9c for rough and 11c for rendered.

SEEDS—Cloverseed is in good demand, and prices remain unchanged. We quote spring at $4 50@4 75 ₱ bush, and prime seed at $5 00@5 25. Timothy is dull at $2 50@2 75 ₱ bush. Flaxseed is quiet at $2 75@2 80 ₱ bush.

Whisky—The market has been dull and heavy, and only 111 bbls have changed hands at 49c ₱ gal. Sales of free have been made at 48c, and of bonded at 48½c. Prices are nominally unchanged.

Provisions—The sales that have been made during the week indicate no change in prices. Prime city cured we quote at 16½c, and country rendered at 15½@16c.

Lard—The market has been dull and heavy, and only 11 tierces have changed hands at 12½c. Sales of free have been made at 12½c, and of country at 12c. In Detroit, on Monday, prime leaf sold at 12½c. In Philadelphia, special sales of choice kettle rendered are reported at 13½c, and common to prime at 12½@13c.

Butter—The sales that have been made during the week indicate no change in prices. Prime city cured we quote at 50@51c, and country rendered at 45@46c.

Whisky—The market has been dull and heavy, and only 111 bbls have changed hands at 49c ₱ gal. Sales of free have been made at 48c, and of bonded at 48½c. In Detroit, on Monday, dressed hogs commanded $7 00@7 50 for the wholesale prices and $8 00@8 50 for retail. Lard is in good demand at 12½c for prime to choice kegs and bbls, and 13c for leaf. Tallow is dull at 9c for rough and 11c for rendered.

Cloverseed—In clover there has hardly enough been done to warrant quotations. The nominal asking price is $7 50 ₱ 64 lbs. Timothy is dull at $2 50@2 75 ₱ bush. Flaxseed—In consequence of the recent decline in the article, the receipts are much larger than for some days past, and the market is dull, with a declining tendency. We quote at $2 75@2 80 ₱ bush.

Provisions—The market has been moderately active, and prices have undergone no change, and the market is active. We note sales of 100 bbls Jenkins's Lilly, at $12 50; 100 bbls Amber Iowa, at $12 00; 200 bbls Crescent, at $11 50; 200 bbls Spring at $12 00, and 50 bbls do, in small lots at $11 75 @ $12 00. The business has been exceedingly small, and with, says the *Price Current*, a further decline in good, a further concession of 25c @ 50c was asked by holders of common grades of State and Western flour. There has been no pressure to force business, however, and the market is not governed by it. The speculative interest was wholly confined to the current wants of the local trade, the sales not exceeding 6,000 bbls. Of Canada flour, there have been jobbing sales at $13 @ $13 25.

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CHRISTMAS.

BY PHOEBE CARY.

O ye who keep possession in age's cold,
Unwilled by estate to dairy of old,
Of sweet, new lessons learn
When Christ, the Lord, is born.

Again the fixed changes of the year
Have brought that season to the world most dear,
And hearts, that have grown cold,
Turn they heard the cry,
Glory to God on high!

And we remember those who from afar
Followed the changing glory of the star
To where its light was shed
Upon the sacred head.

And how such treasure struck worshipper
Brought gifts of gold, and frankincense and myrrh.
And spread in humble ground
In reverence profound.

We think what joy it would have been to share
In their high privileges, to clasp dear
Upon the sacred head
The costly gem
To offer at Bethlehem.

And in that thought we half forget that He
Is wherever we come who fain would be;
Still living every place
With a sweet, ascending grace.

And though in garments of the flesh, as then,
No more is He as this sinful earth with men.
The lover, to him most dear,
Are always with the poor.

And He saith, In-asmuch as ye shall take
Good to these little ones for my dear sake,
Ye that same thing receive
Have brought it unto me!

Therefore, O men in prosperous homes who live,
Having all this logic earthly wealth can give,
Remember in it hold
For whom there is no room—

No room in any home, in any bed,
No soft white pillow for the tired head;
And spare from treasures great
To help the low estate.

Mothers whose sons fill all your homes with light,
To think of the sore that enter as a stranger,
Now sad in sleep profound
On some sad battle ground.

And in this darkened dwellings come with cheer,
With glad gifts to where the fathers lear,
Of sweet Christ's death-day sake
To children's mothers take!

Children whose live are blest with love untold,
Whose gifts are great or than your armscan hold,
Think of the cold that was made
To day with empty hands!

Go fill them up and your own gifts
Their empty hearts, that lie so cold and still,
And brighten hopeless eyes
With glad surprise.

May all who have, at this blest season seek
The priceless little ones, that are cold and weak,
In joyful sweet accord,
Them feeding to the Lord.

Yes, Crucified Redeemer, who didst give
Thy toil thy tears thy life, that we might live,
Thy spirit grant that we
May live one day like Thee!

PETER PRINGLE'S WATCH.

Christmas After-Dinner Dream.

'Ugh merry Christmas, indeed! I wonder what people mean by talking such nonsense. Perfect nuisance—Never saw such a thing. Snow, sleet, bother and bills; and no end of all sorts of beggars. I don't see anything merry in that, I hate Christmas, don't believe anybody ever does. Merry at Christmas, or ever will be, except a parcel of stupid children, who come home from school and eat plum-pudding till they are sick. I'm glad I never was married, for then I should have had a host of noisy brats coming home, making the house untidy, and"—the soliloquist looked around, and his wife, who, during his speech, had been busily engaged in winding up his old-fashioned watch, in a case, on the table, ticked loudly, and its sound recalled years years gone by—for that watch had been a Christmas present from his grandfather. Had that not been a merry Christmas? Oh, yes! merry as the light and innocent heart of childhood could make it, in glad companionship with mirthful beings like itself. But who in that hard-featured man could have recognized a child? Peter Pringle's house, though filled with furniture and as comfortable as money could make it—for Pringle was no niggard where his own comfort was concerned—yet bore the stamp of solitude, and, with all its luxury, looked desolate; and often, very often, did Pringle find it so, for not friend resided in the city whose chairs—no one came to see him, save an old client, who paid him a formal visit once or twice a year, more from a nut than for any other reason;—and to morrow would be Christmas day, yet no one was coming to keep festival with him.

There was to be no pleasant assembling beneath the roof of the lonely house. He had given [illegible] aths, his old housekeeper, leave to have some friends, but she had answered, "Thank you: I'm like you, I hate Christmas myself. Besides, master Peter ordered it himself, and Martha was to dine after him."

That was the only way that occurred to Pringle of spending the day unhappy.

"Well, I'm sure, what's this stare for?" he said, looking at and opening the letter. "Wan something, I dare say; wish to Fate they'd take it for granted that I am never alone; going fifty miles in a deep snow for what?—to be wished a 'merry Christmas!' Ugh! to see people laughing, and passing in merry groups to a church or a christian man's house, too; mirth and persons no synonymous; hate persons;" and flinging the letter into the table, he paced up and down the room.

He walked to the window. It was growing dusk. Bright fires were throwing a ruddy glow on the snow, which streaked the houses. People were hurrying along the streets, many with parcels—little Christmas treasures—for to-morrow; communing, passing, filled with pleasant thoughts, to offices, bringing home turkies and game from market, laughing and joking, gaily looking forward to the morrow's mirth; and then came the thought to many, in every genial heart, as it he had made a wager to it.

Right all the neighborhood in the space of a moment, and each one seemed to feel it, for at the same time as the scampers up the ladder, saying he is "throwing light on the subject," not ages, perhaps, but cursing a great deal of light, and in many very unlovely ways had the lamplighter in the greatest respect for his wonderful agility, which he has often longed to imitate.

And now it is darker still, and a hackcarriage drives up the street, and stops before the opposite house; and the bad dog Pringle, who had been watching for one, having been watched for, and anxiously expected—and out tumble—for there is no other word so expressive—four or five children, in high glee, followed by papa and mamma and papa, plus very smart, and then, at the foot of the staircase, there is such a kissing, and little arms are twined around little necks, and the works hurried up stairs by other little folks; and the doors are closed; and then the shadows on the blind in the drawing-room show two more fires, those on the ceiling dimly, as they turns from the window with an impatient "Pshaw!"

Oh! how cold and cheerless his room looked; it was dark, much darker than out of doors, and the fire had got low; and the gas lamp was shedding a ghastly light on the ground and, with a slight shudder he said "I will go to-morrow!" It was not the warm affectionate letter which decided him—not the sweet words, "Do come, dear uncle, and we will try to make you happy"—no, nor a feeling of affection for those who were inviting him, that made him consent; it was because he thought he should be more comfortable there than at home. So he rang the bell for Martha. "I am going down to the Austins," he said, as she slowly entered the room.

"What for? When?"

"What for? Because I like it. When? To-morrow. So put a shirt and some socks in my bag, and all the things I'm likely to want."

"Very well, then, I'm to stay here by myself—pleasant;" and with her usual slow pace she walked out again.

This speech seemed unnatural, but Martha did not care. She could no more peg uncouth; there was a coarse sort of

ove about her, too, for him; she fancied no one could or would take the care of him that she did, and therefore she was not slow in dampening his ardor for leaving his home, whenever such a wonderful event occurred. Christmas would seek to weaken this happy trust—who would undertake the cruel task of telling those young hearts how soon the mingling with the world would wean them from each other—how nearer and dearer ties would come between them, and they would live to say, how, when we were young, we loved one another?

She was a pretty, fair-haired, bright-eyed creature, little Agnes Austin, and used to bound about the house, like some spirit, she seemed in every place at once. You scarcely heard her ringing laugh in the hall, but she stood before you; and as for walking, it was a thing she seemed hardly able to do; notwithstanding her quiet mother's constant admonitions, there was no hurry she never did anything so common as to walk quietly across her room; and her light-heartedness, light-footedness, and light-hairedness obtained for her the nickname of "fairy," and by such she was always called.

Mary Lester was not pretty, though she was loveable and interesting, quiet, steady, and cheerful; being remarkable for neither beauty nor wit, she was unattractive to the common observer; but those who knew her high principles, and her unflinching performance of her duty in its strictest sense, loved her as she deserved to be loved.

How particularly comfortable Mr. Austin's library does look; such a famous fire, such a lazy cat lying before it, such a bright kettle boiling on it, such a nice breakfast laid on such a white cloth, that actually looks white notwithstanding the snow; such a party assembled at breakfast—such a contented, happy party, not one among them who does not look with love in his neighbor's face. What room, then, would not seem comfortable.

"Papa," said Agnes suddenly to her father, who was engaged in that, to most men, important occupation, reading the newspaper; "Papa—dear—" No answer. Again she said, "Papa dear. Now you shn't read another line till you answer me;" and she covered with her hands the portion of the paper he was reading.

"How can you be such a goose," said Mary, smiling, "as to imagine that your hands can; revent Mr. Austin seeing? He is reading, you see."

"Ah! but it has made him look up, though," she answered, as Mr. Austin peered over his spectacles at the merry face of his darling little daughter. "Now, do tell me, do you think he's a bear?"

"Eh! do I think he's a bear? Who's a bear?"

"Mr. Pringle."

"A bear, my love! Oh! dear me, I hope not for our sakes, and especially for yours, for he will most assuredly make but one mouthful of such a tiny thing as you, my little Fairy."

"Oh, now, don't be silly, papa, pretending you don't understand me. I mean a rough, bearish, snappish sort of fellow."

"My dear little girl, how can I tell? I never saw him in my life; he is your mother's friend; you must ask her for information; she transacted all business with him, and it is to her we are indebted for this agreeable addition to our limited hold;" and he patted Mary kindly on the shoulder.

"Well, how funny, I never knew that before; what is he like mamma; shall I be very frightened at him?"

"No, my dear, I hope not, he is not very formidable in appearance, and I think a little gentle kindness will go far towards softening his harsh manners; poor man, he has been embittered in early life, and to him goodness and happiness are but names."

A ring at the bell announced a visitor. "Here he is!" said Agnes, springing from her chair.

"Who? Frank?" said Mary, starting from hers.

"No, no, your uncle, Mary," answered Agnes.

"Oh?" she said, reseating herself very calmly.

Mr. Austin laughed. "What a shame, Agnes, to startle people so, and then disappoint them; but you're wrong, I see, unless Mary's uncle is done up in a brown paper parcel," he continued, as the Sorsal carried with him in the hall. "Miss Lester."

"Ha, Mary, who from? What fun! oh! cut the string, cut the string, make haste;" but Mary, with a very glowing face, continued undoing the knots, and when Agnes's patience was quite exhausted, she took from the folds of paper a very elegant desk.

"Well, am sure, a Christmas-box, indeed, and a very handsome one, said Mr. Austin, "how the only difficulty will be to discover the giver. Take into your own room, Mary, and hunt through it well, you may find a note to explain."

In a very low voice, but with a smile of great pleasure, she answered, "I had the explanatory note by the first post."

"Oh! indeed, then so long as you are in the secret, we will ask no questions; now, Miss curious agnes, leave Mary's present alone, and see would [illegible] for lunch, or will be too late. Mary must remain at home," he continued, "in case of her uncle coming."

"Oh! certainly," said Mrs. Austin.

Agnes soon came down, muffled up in furs till her small bright face peeped out like a flower hidden in a mass of foliage, and they started merrily for lunch, or tea to receive her uncle, whom she awaited with a nervous dread. They had not been gone ten minutes, before she received the awful announcement brought down to him.

"Oh! how do you do? You're Mary Lester?"

"Yes I dear uncle!"

"Not a bit like your mother; she was a very pretty woman at your age. Where are the rest?"

"Gone to church."

"Church! Up hill in this weather? It's enough to give one an ague to think of it; I haven't been to church for ages."

"I should think not," was Mary's mental reflection, but she only said, "Would you have anything you wanted, dear uncle, directly."

"Directly, I want summer."

"Oh! that," said Mary, smiling sweetly, and helping him off with his over-coat, "is impossible for us to get you, but we will make you as many [illegible], by a warm fire, and welcome."

"Oh! prob'ly get me something to eat!"

The bell was rung, and some refreshments ordered, which Mary hoped would in it so charmingly, and moved about him so quietly, and the room was so comfortable, and he was so amused to the charm of a bright fire and cheerful face, that the ice melted gradually softening, and even stooped and patted the cat instead of kicking it; and when the animal, after rising from its sleep, stretched itself, curved round its legs, and finally jumped on his knee, he almost looked pleased, and said, "Lo! bless me, I never saw a cat do that before. What does it mean?"

"Why, uncle, it means that it has received the kindness of his welcome from the Austins on their return from church, and considers you a friend," said Mary, playing fire, the rest of the party seated around him. Peter Pringle had never felt so comfortable. Did he cast one thought upon his own dull home? No, not he; he was comfortable, and therefore it never occurred to him that any one should disturb the present, the day almost flew away, so quickly the hours passed, and at five o'clock arrived the company to dinner. Mrs. Austin's father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Austin's children, Mr. Austin's father and mother, Frank Wentworth, and Mr. Jones, Mr. Austin's assistant.

Mary Lester, unfortunately for his piece of mild, been there a little too often, for he found that, instead of writing his sermons, "Sentence and Agnes" flowed from his pen, and, instead of writing texts, he filled his pages with faces, all bearing the same expression; in his drawer, and in his desk were faded flowers, pieces of ribbons, and scraps of paper, all [illegible] parcels of Mary's size, and, in short, poor Jones was irretrievably in love. There were few things more amusing than to see Agnes unconsciously exercising her extraordinary power of fascination on the poor curate, to avoid the necessity of sitting next to Jones, and to witness her saucy indifference, her loud answers to the tender observations they were eating roast beef or stewed horse shoes; and so poor Jones was the only uncomfortable looking being among them—away from Agnes, and managed to get between them, was chattering away to them about dolls and dolls' houses. Frank and Mary were murmuring together like two doves, unconscious that while they were eating roast beef or stewed horse shoes; and so poor Jones was the only uncomfortable looking being among them—away from Agnes, and managed to get between them, was chattering away to them about dolls and dolls' houses. Frank and Mary were murmuring together like two doves, unconscious that while they were eating roast beef or stewed horse shoes; and so poor Jones was the only uncomfortable looking being among them—away from Agnes, and managed to get between them, was chattering away to them about dolls and dolls' houses. Frank and Mary were murmuring together like two doves, unconscious

was over, the state he was in would have cured the most dreadful cold in the head ever known.

I was over at last, and they adjourned to the drawing-room. After tea a game of forfeits for the children was proposed, which not at all suiting Mr. Pringle, he took his way home itward, grumbling all the time at the "confounded noise." Mr. Austin followed him.

"Excuse me for troubling you again, Mr. Pringle, but I love dear Mary as my own, and cannot bear to make her unhappy—I must, therefore, try to make you relent."

"It's no good, sir, I tell you. I never alter my mind. He's too young and too poor; long engagements are detestable things; and as they're not to be married, they'd better not be looking dismal at each other; so do as I advise you, pack off that fellow. If not, you know the consequences. They will marry, I shan't give them a farthing, and shall leave my money to old Martha or a hospital. There now, don't talk to me about that any more."

"But, indeed, sir, you are too hasty. Wentworth is an excellent young man—a man of strong and deep feeling. Such a blow to his hopes, just as he is starting in life, will ruin him inevitably, and soul. His employment will no longer have charms for him, and you will drive him, perhaps, into misery and vice."

"Let 'em marry, then. It's nothing to me."

"A little assistance from you, sir, would enable them to marry comfortably and would enable you to marry [illegible]."

"I'll do nothing of the sort, I tell you; so don't talk any more about it."

With a sigh of despair, Mr. Austin walked out of the room, and Pringle took his large watch out of his pocket and put it on the mantelpiece, and gazed long and fixedly at its old white face and slowly moving hands; and as he looked, the thin film seemed to gather over it, which grew thicker and thicker, and larger and larger, and Pringle held his breath, and his hair stood on end; for from that film came forth a shadowy form—a man with a scythe and an hour glass.

"Who art thou?" said Pringle, tremblingly.

"I am he who makes of the child an old man; of the chrysalis a gaudy butterfly; one often prayed to come, and often prayed to go, yet who never comes twice. I bring tears, yet soothe al. woe and have the blessings of the worn and wearied hearts, for I bring them a peaceful rest at last; one whom you sadly used—and I have come to tell you so. I AM TIME. Sixty years I have been with you, and what use have you made of me?"

"I have worked hard," murmured Pringle.

"To what purpose? You have gathered wealth for your own comfort. What benefit has it been to your fellow creatures? what advantage has your knowledge been to them? whom have you comforted by kindly words? whom have profited by your good example? And now that your strength is failing, and your eyes growing dim with age, you have not the support of your own children, and your heart turns to your grave. Look back on your past life—think what it was that made you the man you are, and then look forward, and I will stay by you yet a little while, that you may have the chance of a fellow-creature's blessing to gild the rays of your setting sun. Stay, a spirit shall assist you."

And Pringle, with his strained eyeballs glaring on the form before him, beheld Mary Austin, a girl of fifteen, tall and graceful, bearing in its hand a large roll of paper; its robes were of cloud-like texture, and its face fair and beautiful, but changeful in expression; occasionally sad—so sad!—then beaming with joy.

"Spirit of Retrospection, unfold thy tablets!" And the spirit slowly unwound the roll of paper, and held it before Pringle. What does she see? A child—a little girl beside its mother's knee. There, said he, "tell me what you think of that picture." Following me a paper on which was written with the clearness and beauty of copperplate:

"Their reverend beards that sweep their bosoms wet
With the cool dews of shady Olives."

"Charming, said I. "And what then? What is the meaning of it?" Well, I was thinking of Olivet, and then I wanted a rhyme for Olivet; and rhymes are the ruddere, you know, according to Hudibras; and then, pinning the paper to the picture before me—their reverend beards all dripping with the dews of night."

ANCIENT CAROL.

God rest you, merry gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Christ is born of Mary
Was born upon this day.
To save us all from Satan's power,
When we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy!
For I am Christ our Savior
Was born on Christmas Day

In Bethlehem, in Jewry
This blessed babe was born
And laid within a manger
Upon this blessed morn
The which his mother Mary
Nothing did afford, cept cattle,
dogs, &c.

From God our Heavenly Father
A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name.

Fear not, said he, for angels
I nothing you affright
This day is born a Savior
Of virtue, power and might
To free you from the tyrant's claws
And captive to release
The people in these days.

The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a feeding
In tempest, storm and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway,
This heavenly babe to find,
Tidings, &c.

But when to Bethlehem they came,
Whereat this infant lay,
They found Him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay,
His mother Mary kneeling,
Unto Him lord did pray.
Tidings, &c.

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and charity
Each other now embrace,
This holy tide of Christmas
All other doth deface.
Tidings, &c.

ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON.

AN ANCIENT MYTH MODERNIZED.

BY MISS DINAH MARIA MULOCH, AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

What, weeping, weeping, my little son,
Angry tears, like that great commander,
Alexander—
Because of dragons is left not one
To be a new cappadocia's scourge
For your bold sake.
Without delaying—
On Saintland pony—
A knight all mounted—a young St. George?

Come, sit at my feet, my little son,
Sit at my feet and mend your wagon!
Full many a dragon
You'll have to fight with, ere life be done.
Stay—and I'll tell you of three of four
(Vitalmous cat-le)
You'll have to battle,
When mother's sleeping
Where all your weeping
Will not awaken her any more.

First comes a creature whose name is Sloth,
Look at its claws hard, creeping on slowly!
Simple and weakly,
Who couldn't harm you, however wroth,
But slay him, my lad, or he'll slay you:
Crawling and crafty,
Twisting and strangling,
Break from him, tramp on him,
And as you stamp—kill him,
You'll be St. George and the dragon, anew.

Then the c's a monster, most fateful first,
Called Ease, or Comfort, or harmless Pleasure,
Born of smooth Leisure,
On sweetest cushion luxurious nurs'd,
Who'll lay you down on a bed of down,
If you'll sell it, just
To catch one minute
With Jeance in it,
Or ward off sorrow
Until to-morrow,
Trample him—trample him into dust!

And one, a reptile yclept False Shame,
Who slowly drags its fettered length on,
Afraid of its strength,
Many a spirit one pierce from blame,
But up and at it your own true urge!
Smite, smite, I row, hard,
The monstrous thing!
By thine ne or star,
And never falter
And be my own son—my brave St. George!

St. George and the Dragon! oh, my boy,
There are many old dragons left—world
soon grey—
And few St. Georges!
There's nick-e'nor and little joy!
Put on with your—on to the endless fight!
Your sword right bright,
Your armor pure,
Your heart true as flint on,
And may your dragon
St. George (recent) vanished the right!

A BEGGARED MILLIONAIRE.

The Romance of a Poor Young Man—"Easy Come, Easy Go"—Exemplification of the Old Adage.

Last week a brief item chronicling the sale of the Steele Farm, on Oil creek, for taxes due the Government, started on its voyage on the sea of excitement, and in a few days it was known and read by many without a second thought, but those few items might easily form the text for a discourse as startling as the moral is true. It is hardly an exaggeration to state that whenever petroleum is known, the name of "Johnny Steele," the young prince of Venango county, has been heard, while the accounts of his apparently lavish and reckless expenditure, were told in hundreds of papers, from the New York *Herald* down or up. Soon after the sale of the farm, the closing act, a brief history of the same may not be entirely without interest, which the Crawford *Journal* thus narrates:

The farm, more generally known "on the creek," as the widow McClintock farm, is immediately opposite the flourishing little town of Reno, and was among the first of the oil producing farms of the valley. Early in 1865 Mr. Steele, a young man from the town of Venango, purchased the farm, which was then a wilderness, for $2,000. Soon after the purchase, a well was commenced on the farm, and in the Sixth District, composed of the counties of Lancaster, Chadden Stevens has been duly elected; in the Seventh District, composed of the counties of Schuylkill and Lebanon, Henry L. Cake has been duly elected; in the Eighth District, composed of the counties of Northampton, Carbon, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne, Daniel D. Van Aaken has been duly elected; in the Twelfth District, composed of the counties of Luzerne and Susquehanna, Charles Denison has been duly elected; in the Thirteenth District, composed of the counties of Bradford, Wyoming, Sullivan, Columbia and Montour, Elijah Hunt has been duly elected; in the Fourteenth District, composed of the counties of Northumberland, Union, Snyder, Juniata and Dauphin, Geo. F. Miller has been duly elected; in the Fifteenth District, composed of the counties of Cumberland and Perry, A. J. Goodbrenner has been duly elected; in the Eighteenth District, composed of the counties of Adams, Franklin, Fulton, Bedford and Somerset, Wm. H. Koontz, has been duly elected; in the Nineteenth District, composed of the counties of Cambria, Blair, Huntingdon and Mifflin, Daniel McCallen has been duly elected; in the Eighteenth District, composed of the counties of Centre, Clinton, Lycoming, Potter and Tioga, Glenni W. Scofield has been duly elected; in the Nineteenth District, composed of the counties of Erie, Warren, McKean, Forest, Elk, Cameron, Jefferson and Clearfield, Glenni W. Scofield has been duly elected; the Twentieth District, composed of the counties of Crawford, Venango, Mercer and Clarion, Darwin A. Finney has been duly elected; in the Twenty-first District, composed of the counties of Indiana, Westmoreland and Fayette, Conrad Shoenfeldt has been duly elected; in the Twenty-second District, composed of that part of Allegheny county south of the Ohio and Allegheny rivers, and including Neville Island, James K. Moorhead has been duly elected; in the Twenty-third District, composed of that part of Allegheny county north of the Ohio and Allegheny rivers, and Butler and Armstrong, Thaddeus Stevens Mellinger has been duly elected; in the Twenty-fourth District, composed of the counties of Beaver, Lawrence, Washington and Greene, George V. Lawrence has been duly elected.

Now, Governor Andrew G. Curtin, Governor as aforesaid, have issued this my Proclamation, hereby publishing and declaring that the said Thaddeus Stevens, Leonard Myers, William D. Kelley, Caleb N. Taylor, Thomas M. Bayne, Charles O'Neill, sr., J. Lawrence Getz, Daniel J. Van Auken, Chas. Mackey Leary, Scott Orr, George V. Miller, A. J. Glossbrenner, Wm. H. Koontz, Daniel McCallen, Stephen Hutchinson, Glenni W. Scofield, Darwin A. Finney, John Covode, Jas. K. Moorhead, Thomas Williams and George V. Lawrence have been returned as duly elected in their several districts before mentioned to represent the people of the United States, for the term of two years each, to commence from and after the 4th day of March next.

Given under my hand and the great seal of the State Capitol at Harrisburg, this 6th day of November, in the year of our Lord 1866, and of the Commonwealth the 91st. By the Governor.

A. G. CURTIN,
Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Increase of Crime.

In the Illinois Penitentiary the number of inmates has doubled since 1861, and the same alarming increase of crime, as indicated by the number of convictions, exists in other sections of the country. Since the close of the rebellion society has been in a chaotic condition. Peace there came upon us a large number of young men were discharged from the army, accustomed to camp life, and their natural desperation was doubtless increased by the disposition of boldness and daring which are parts of a soldier's training. In many instances, too, want, arising from the inability or unwillingness of employment, has aggravated a natural depravity of character. The breaking up and scattering of many households, by which mothers and children were separated and thrown upon their own resources, has resulted from the conservative influences of the household, is a prominent cause of that piece of crimes which grows out of destitution, idleness and vice.

But a small part of the total of crime may be traced in the general laxity with which the laws are executed from the conservative influences of the personal power. The judiciary is now notably weak, and not always responsible. We have laws and penalties enough, but not sufficient rigor of administration.

ITALIAN COMMERCE.

The unification and pacification of Italy have already given new life and energy to her industrial and commercial classes, and before many years something of the former trade and revenue of Italian sea ports will be seen. The government is encouraging the aristocracy to use their influence and wealth in promoting their own interests, which lies in the revival of the indus tries and commerce of the whole peninsula. Commissions composed of eminent men are appointed, charged to examine the claims daily made in the public interest to listen to the representatives of trade and industry, and to attend to every proposal for improvement that may come before them. Every day companies are formed with the object of reviving commerce. The Italian government will use all its efforts to facilitate the new relations which the establishment of a regular line of steamers with Egypt will create, and to encourage the zeal of the shippers of Venice. We hail these encouraging signs of a new life, for in the development of American productions and commerce will be profitable sharers.

The National Banks.

Early in the session of Congress, resolutions were introduced in effect instructing the Committee on Banking and Currency to inquire into the expediency of withdrawing the National bank currency, winding up the National banks and furnishing the country with greenbacks, or currency of a similar character. We refer particularly to the resolutions of Mr. Ross and Mr. Harding, members from Illinois. Although these resolutions were laid on the table, the vote of 60 to 91 showed that several members were of the opinion that greenbacks are a much better currency than National notes. It is not easy to see where any important distinction lies, since both rest on the credit and good faith of the General Government. Propositions by Senators Chandler and Pomeroy to increase the amount of the National currency to another extreme view, of a diametrically opposite character, and we were glad to be informed by our special telegram of Wednesday, that the idea of expansion finds no favor with the Finance Committee of the Senate, or Committee on Ways and Means. Disparaging the reputation of the national notes, or failure to expand the amount of them, are equally injudicious. Commissioner Hyland in his annual report on the National Banks showed that their currency had fully answered all the purposes originally contemplated. The 1667 banks now in operation, besides furnishing a market for the Government bonds, have not only furnished a secured currency of uniform value throughout the country but have placed the currency where it should be, within the control of the Government, and have been an important auxiliary in the financial operations of the Treasury Department.

TRIAL OF SURRATT.

Certain journals whose political sympathies always run in opposition to the Government, affect to be concerned about the unpleasant effect which the conduct of the trial of Surratt will call out. They assume that Surratt knows all about the origin of the plot, and that the trial will show it only to have been crazy and foolish conception, and not to have been a conspiracy. Then they query what will become of the Republican attempts to connect Jeff. Davis and President Johnson with the crime? And recently Surratt's bold and reckless expenditure, were told in hundreds of papers, from the New York *Herald* down or up. Soon after the sale of the farm, the closing act, a brief history of the same may not be entirely without interest, which the Crawford *Journal* thus narrates:

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Feniasism in Ireland.

The latest Cable accounts show that the pretended uprising in Ireland has proved a humbug, a farce and a fizzle. There appears to be no trouble in Ireland of a kind that can seriously disturb the English authority; and perhaps John Bull has overestimated the matter as much as he chagrins in the matter. A series of noisy declamation, after the printing of reams of resolutions, speeches and editorials, with no end of late and startling telegrams from Ireland, and a few pale confessions in aid of Irish independence in every American household, there remains but the contested battle of Stone River to attest the valor, fulfil the promises, and verify the prophecies of the Irish leaders, and the renowned and dismal-looking host of the O'Mahoneys, Roberteens, Sweeneys, &c.

Claims of Loyal Slaveholders.

Four thousand claims have been received by the Commissioners appointed to examine claims of loyal slaveholders in Delaware and Maryland. Of the Maryland claims, awards have been made in three counties, number filed, 1,867, number acted on from 1st to 4th session of the Commission, 2,802; number filed in the Delaware Commission, 1[illegible]; number of awards made, 45; rejected, 9; number not acted on, 31. Total claims, 2,867; total amount claimed, [illegible]. One interesting fact came to the notice of the Commission for Missouri. Many loyal slaveholders in the western counties, before authority had been given to receive colored recruits in that State, purchased slaves and had them mustered into the service of the United States. Four or five slaves were thus purchased by Montgomery county, and were always to be found at the "Old Corner." About three years ago he began to decline, and was finally compelled to take up his abode in the City Hospital, where he lingered out the life died from old age.

The Veronese.

The Veronese have not only witnessed their monks depart without a regret but have permitted them to carry off their most precious relic, the Holy Ass of Verona. There is a tradition that this Ass was the identical beast on which our Savior sat when he entered Jerusalem, and, after the Jews had accomplished their will of him, any longer to dwell in the city, he, therefore, crossed the seas (which were miraculously made solid beneath his hoofs) and went to Cyprus, Candia, Malta, Sicily, and after various wanderings, at length took up its abode at Verona, where it lived for many years. From it he descended a race of remarkably long asses, said still to abound in that city. When the holy animal died a pompous funeral was accorded to it, but it was not buried. Its mortal remains were preserved, and placed in the interior of the body of an artificial ass made expressly for the purpose, and which was confided to the care of the Friars of the Convent of Notre Dame des Orgues."

Captain John S. Sutor, who was run over by a locomotive at Freeport, on the Western Pennsylvania Railroad, on the 12th inst., died from his injuries on the 15th, at his residence in Indiana. Capt. Sutor, at the time of his death, was about thirty-five years of age. On the 20th of April, 1861, he joined company D, 11th Pennsylvania Reserves, as a private, serving his country nobly for three years, at the end of which time he had risen to the rank of Captain.

The message of Governor Ballard to the Idaho Legislature notes a marked decrease of crime in that Territory. It says agriculture, during the past year have been prosecuted successfully in the Boise valley, and although the product of the quartz ledges are known to be rich, they have not been worked. It states that the yield of precious metals during the past year aggregated [illegible] any similar period. It recommends the organization of Territorial militia as a protection against Indians, and for the purposes of obtaining the Territory's quota of arms from the General Government. It alludes to the importance of Railroad communication from the navigable waters of the Columbia River, via Boise Valley, intersecting the Central Pacific Railroad.

"PEG-LEG SMITH."

Death of a Strange Mountain Character—The Man who Amputated His Own Leg.

The San Francisco *Morning Call* announces the death in that city of a noted mountain character, Thomas L. Smith, who was a Kentuckian, and nearly seventy years of age when he died. It says of him:

In early life he became a member of the American Fur Company, and for many thirty years trapped beaver, hunted buffalo, and fought Indians in all the mountain fastnesses of the Rocky mountains. While leading the life of a mountaineer, the visited nearly every portion of the country lying between the Mississippi river and the Pacific ocean, and there was not a pass of importance in the sierra He acquired the language of the Blackfeet, Nez Perces, Shoshones, Utah, Pahvants, Crows, Blackfeet, Navajos, Apaches, and became a chief in the Utah tribe. In 1827, while trapping on the headwaters of the Yellowstone, in company with four companions, his party was attacked by a band of roving Indians, during the battle Smith was severely wounded shot in the leg, the bones of which were shattered so badly that he became satisfied that he would die unless the leg was amputated. As none of his companions had the courage necessary to perform the job, Smith performed the amputation himself. He took a butcher knife, and, with no professional reader, Smith's leg healed, and formed a very good stump. It was this fact that gave him the name of Peg-leg Smith. In 1828 he visited California for the first time, and was so pleased with the climate that he returned there when he left the country. He became the possession of the United States. Four or five hundred years ago, Peg-leg was a familiar name, and was always to be found at the "Old Corner." About three years ago he began to decline, and was finally compelled to take up his abode in the City Hospital, where he lingered out the life died from old age.

The Great Eastern.

The Great Eastern.—Some six hundred men are at present employed in refitting the Great Eastern, which has been in possession of Mr. Despecher since the 10th inst., and according to contract she is to be ready to proceed from Liverpool to New York by the 5th of March, and will leave the latter port on the first trip to France early in April. The rate of passage is fixed at 1000, for the voyage out and home again. The vessel will be prepared to receive 2000 passengers, all first class; but the average number reckoned upon in the estimates for the undertaking will not exceed 1000 during the first year, and the profits will be derived principally from the sale of tickets. The proprietors will, no doubt, take every means of insuring this enterprise success, for the American public, upon whom it must almost solely depend for ultimate success.

This beautiful passage occurs in Holmes new novel in the *Atlantic Monthly*: "The old clock that Monmouth and Marlborough must have heard a hundred years ago was clicking the steady pulse beats of its second century. The featured moon dial had lifted one eye, as if to watch the child, as it watched so many generations of children, while the swinging pendulum ticked them along into youth, maturity, gray hairs, death, bed-clothes-tickling through the years of the parsonage power. The judiciary is now notably weak, and not always responsible. We have laws and penalties enough, but not sufficient rigor of administration.

Another Good Notice.

[From the Pittsburgh Gazette, December 29.]

In essential elements we do not perceive wherein the case of the *Times* differs from that of the COMMERCIAL. Each of them followed the President and advocated his policy until both of them changed and began to oppose him before them. That the COMMERCIAL turned back soonest is not due to its larger development on conscientiousness, nor to its greater intellectual perceptions, but solely to the fact that Allegheny was